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WEEKLY FREE NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

East edition No 638



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Don't let our Christmas traditions be eradicated

THERE is absolutely no denying, despite what some may suggest, that Britain's multi-cultural blend is what has made this nation even greater.

However, we should always remember that while influences from afar may seep into our way of life, we must retain our core values and continue to build on the cultural bricks upon which we have constructed the foundations of our society.

I say this as, once again, there seems to be another shift away from our schools conducting nativity plays this festive season for fear of offending or excluding pupils or parents.

It is, of course, a very Christian attitude to consider everyone, but believe them or not, Christian attitudes underpin our very modern society and to lose them and the traditions that come with them, would be an irreversible tragedy.



Editor **Chris Britcher**

If we went to a foreign land with different traditions, we would, undoubtedly, look to respect and indulge them.

That, after all, is what happens if you opt to live or visit a country with a particularly set of cultural values. You adapt.

There is an issue of political correctness which has eroded British traditional values in recent years. And while it is right to ensure we respect other cultures, we should ensure they respect ours too. And, more to the point, we stand firm and strong in our support of our own traditions.

Christmas is a time when we should all unite. Regardless of faith, we should, as a nation, simply seek to come together for a winter festival built around the birth of Jesus and the Christian story we should all continue to celebrate.

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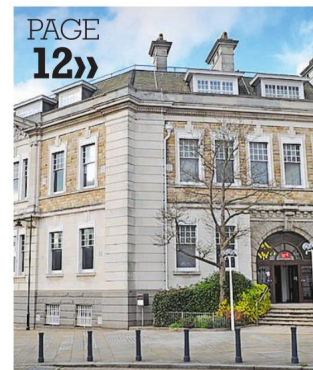
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55 TV cash for Dover clash

Dover Athletic take on top tier team in televised FA Cup game



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Claire Tiltman murder verdict... Special Report

'Evil' Ash-Smith guilty of killing schoolgirl Claire

By Chris Britcher

chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

IT TOOK 21 years, but finally, the man long linked with her murder was this week given a life sentence for the brutal, random killing of teenager Claire Tiltman.

Described by Dartford MP Gareth Johnson as "evil to the core", former milkman Colin Ash-Smith, 46, was found guilty by a jury at the Inner London Crown Court. They took just three hours to reach a verdict.

On Friday, he was handed a minimum 21-year jail term for the crime which stunned the county.

Claire, who was preparing to take her GCSEs at Dartford Grammar School, had been walking to see a friend on January 18, 1993, just days after her birthday.

She never reached her destination. As she walked down an alleyway close to London Road in Greenhithe, she was stabbed repeatedly. She managed to stagger out of the alleyway to raise the alarm but could not survive.

Ash-Smith is already serving three life sentences for attempted murder, attempted rape, kidnap and grievous bodily harm with



VICTIM AND KILLER: Claire Tiltman, left, was stabbed to death by Colin Ash-Smith, right.

intent. He was originally jailed at the Old Bailey in 1997.

But he had always been the number one suspect in the case of Claire Tiltman. However, his mother, a former local Labour councillor and Swanscombe mayor, provided him with an alibi.

She was covering for him though. Ash-Smith had snapped after seeing

Claire on a zebra crossing.

He would evade justice for his horrific act, however, until this week.

As one of the county's longest-running cold-cases, senior investigating officer Detective Superintendent Rob Vinson said his team never gave up hope of finding her killer.

He said: "Every single one of the

officers who have worked on this case over the last two decades have refused to allow Claire's killer to go unaccounted for and escape justice.

"The investigation team has meticulously built this case over a number of years. I'm pleased the jury reached the only conclusion - that Colin Ash-Smith was responsible for Claire's murder."

Vile murderer attended the funeral of teen he stabbed

THREE years after Claire Tiltman was killed, Colin Ash-Smith was arrested just hours after attacking a 21-year-old woman with a knife in Station Road, Greenhithe, on October 17, 1995.

A search of his distinctive white Ford Capri uncovered one half of a school tie which police established had been used in the rape, kidnap and attempted murder of a 27-year-old woman in Swanscombe on December 21, 1988.

In December 1996 he appeared at the Old Bailey and pleaded guilty to both attacks. He was given life imprisonment.

At the time of his arrest, Ash-Smith denied any involvement in Claire's death.

Ash-Smith knew Claire and her family. He met her through the local Royal British Legion Club. He even attended her funeral, despite having killed her.

He rang police the day after her death to admit to being in the area and possibly having spotted her crossing the road. It was just a ruse



FUNERAL: Ash-Smith pictured at Claire's funeral in 1993

to explain why his car may have been spotted in the area.

Cold case investigators also found that during his time in prison for the 1988 and 1995 attacks, Ash-Smith befriended a fellow prisoner in which he confessed to attacking someone he saw using a zebra crossing.

The prisoner assumed the confession was for a crime Ash-Smith was already convicted of. But the zebra crossing was only relevant in the case of Claire.

On February 28, Ash-Smith was charged with her murder. This week he starts to rot in jail for his crime.



ALLEY: Claire's murder scene

Tragedy of a ruined family

THE death of Claire Tiltman would have a devastating impact on her family.

As an only child, it forced her grief-stricken parents into a pit of despair from which they would never recover.

Her mother, Lin, would pass away in 2008. She was just 56.

Her father, Cliff, fought tirelessly to keep the memory of his daughter alive and for justice to finally be served. But in 2012, after years of illness, he passed away. He was just 62.

Even on his death bed, he pleaded for the killer to come forward.



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Games get set for return of Geek for 2015 expo

VIDEO game festival Geek has confirmed it is returning to Margate for a three-day event in February.

The popular show focuses on the evolution of gaming, offering more than 1,000 playable video games to play on hundreds of consoles.

They date back from the 1970s to the latest batch of next-generation consoles such as the PlayStation 4 and

Xbox One. Aside from hundreds of consoles, there are also multi-player opportunities.

Geek (Gaming Expo East Kent) will take place at Margate's Winter Gardens from February 20-22.

Other activities at the event include workshops, cards, panel discussions, developer talks and tournaments.



HAPPY: New mum Kaddy Lee-Preston

Kaddy delight as she gives birth to girl

TV WEATHER presenter Kaddy Lee-Preston is enjoying her first weekend as a mother after giving birth to a healthy baby girl this week.

The popular star kept her fans waiting though – she was almost three weeks past her due date.

But it all ended up well with little Albany Rainbird Wilkinson weighing in at 6lb and 10oz.

Both mother and child are doing well.

Speaking to KoS on Friday, Ms Lee-Preston, who lives near Ashford, said the link between her daughter's middle name and the profession which made her famous is merely coincidental.

She said: "The middle name is her grandmother's maiden name so it's nice to have a weather theme!"

Ms Lee-Preston is best known for her role on BBC South East Today and presenting local magazine programme Inside Out.

The 36-year-old left the BBC in 2012 to pursue a successful freelance career, although still continued to make regular appearances on the show. She had been working right up until her due date last month.

Her final public engagement was presenting the Kent on Sunday and Kent Life Food & Drink Awards in Maidstone.

Last gasp hope to save airport is kicked into touch as CPO is rejected

By Jamie Weir

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WITH local campaigners protesting outside the chambers, Thanet District Council voted unanimously to reject plans to serve a compulsory purchase order (CPO) on Manston Airport's new owners.

The decision could deal the final death blow to hopes that the airport might be resurrected.

The CPO would have enabled the council to buy the site without its owners' consent, allowing them to sell it on to a partner who would have reopened it as an airport.

However, councillors took the decision after debating a report, released last week by council officers, which advised against pursuing a CPO on the site.

It now looks likely that the former airport, which was closed in May by former owner, Ann Gloag, with the loss of around 140 jobs, will remain shut.

American consortium, RiverOak, which made three offers for the air-



MANSTON: On the ropes

port when it was put on the market earlier in the year by Ms Gloag, reacted angrily to the council report earlier in the week.

Its CEO, Steven DeNardo, wrote an

open letter criticising the council, stating it was guilty of 'fabricating' rules about the CPO funding process.

He wrote that the council's requirement for RiverOak to prove that it has funding to cover the cost of the CPO, acquire the airport and bring it back into use, has no basis in government rules for the process.

He said in the letter that 'the report is misleading, full of inaccuracies and omissions, and misrepresents our submission to the council.'

The council told KoS it was "disappointing to see such an inflammatory and inaccurate response".

A spokesman said: "Given the risks involved in pursuing a CPO, it would be totally unacceptable for the council to agree an indemnity partner which failed to provide the appropriate assurances."

The site's new owners, Trevor Cartner and Chris Musgrave, who own nearby Discovery Park, say they want to redevelop the site into a mixed use hub.

Paramount park and BBC strike agreement

CHIEFS behind the London Paramount Resort have signed a major deal with the BBC to feature the broadcaster's brands in the multi-billion pound entertainment park.

The resort, due to open in Easter 2020, has a major licensing deal in place with Hollywood studio Paramount. But it allows for other deals to be struck too. And, as reported in KoS last month, it was particularly keen to ensure British TV and culture was represented too.

The partnership will mean that some of the best loved and celebrated programmes and characters to appear on British TV and radio in recent decades could be brought to life at the proposed site on the Swanscombe peninsula.

David Testa, director of LRCH, said: "We are delighted to bring the world's leading public service broadcaster on board. It seems only right that its programmes will be present at the new resort, which will combine the glamour of Hollywood with the best of British culture."

Tributes after popular councillor dies at 55

TRIBUTES have been made this week to the former mayor of Hythe and long-serving district councillor, who died suddenly last weekend.

Keren Belcourt, a Conservative Shepway councillor for 16 years and, at the time of her passing cabinet member for housing, was found dead in the hallway of her home by her husband. It appears she had collapsed. She was 55.

Council leader David Monk said: "She was a star whose light shone brightly through everything she did."

Folkestone MP Damian Collins added: "The sudden death of a friend is always a shock to the system, especially when they are taken in the prime of life."

"She brought a great personal passion to her role as cabinet member for housing, and in particular supporting the council's work building new homes and bringing empty or derelict properties back into public use."

"Our thoughts and prayers are with her husband Reg and their family during these difficult days that they will face together."

KEA

Magic touch to help fight pickpockets

A MAGICIAN has been showing how sleight of hand is used by pickpockets to pinch wallets and mobile phones from unsuspecting victims.

Professional Rob James teamed up with police in Dover to film himself with a hidden camera as he slipped cards the size of smartphones into people's bags and pockets in the town centre. He would distract them by asking directions or simply do it without them even noticing he was nearby.

The production team then stopped the unwitting shoppers, explained what had happened and filmed their reactions – with the aim of making them aware that if someone can slip something into your bag, they can take something out too.

"It was easier than I thought and we had a greater number of hits than we expected," Mr James said.

Karen Griffiths, co-ordinator of the Dover Partnership Against Crime, which developed the video, said: "We saw so many people with their bags open and purses, mobile phones and other valuables clearly on show."

kent-life.co.uk kentnews.co.uk

agenda

What will make next week's headlines...

Quiz PCC Ann Barnes at online police chat

YOU can get the chance to quiz Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner Ann Barnes and the force's Assistant Chief Constable Jo Shiner from the comfort of your home this week, as the duo take part in a live web chat.

The one-hour session gives those logging in the chance to speak to

two of the most senior policing figures in the county on Wednesday, December 17, from 6.30pm.

Mrs Barnes said: "It is an opportunity to have your policing questions answered and to find out what the force is doing to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour in your area, so please do get involved."



The public can watch other questions and the answers during the session. To take part, visit www.kent.police.uk/onlinechat and follow the link to the web chat.

Renew your school child's half-year bus pass now

APPLICATIONS are being invited this week to renew half-year Young Persons' Travel passes.

The pass allows pupils aged 11-to-16 to benefit from school-day bus travel, 6am to 7pm, for a fixed fee of £200, until the end of the summer term.

When the new pass was

introduced in September, parents and carers were, for the first time, offered the opportunity to purchase half-year passes, enabling them to spread the cost.

Applications for the new year term must be received by January 9. For details, see www.kent.gov.uk.

...also

BBC cathedral series

THE second episode in a documentary series looking at Canterbury Cathedral airs on the BBC at 9pm on Monday night.

The series on BBC Two follows life at the cathedral, home of the Church of England, over the course of a year.

Boundary consultation

A CONSULTATION into changes to boundaries covered by councillors at Kent County Council gets into full swing this week.

It forms part of the first phase of an electoral review.

Full story - turn to page 12.

No police strike here

KENT Police staff will not be taking part in a 24-hour strike tomorrow.

The strike, which does not include officers, was called by Unison in a dispute over pay. Kent Police staff did not take part in the vote to walk-out.

Forum's hotel meeting

THE Sittingbourne Local Engagement Forum meets on Tuesday.

It unites local and county councillors, as well as representatives from the police and fire. The meeting takes place at the Coniston Hotel at 7pm.

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Adria - Contemporary
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Don't let present pressure force you into turning to payday loan

With restrictions coming into force over the level of interest rates levied on short-term loans next month, there are fears many will turn to payday lenders this Christmas and risk spiralling into debt

By Molly Kersey
molly.kersey@archant.co.uk

THE problems of payday borrowing have been well documented over the years. Offering quick applications and allowing consumers to take out short-term loans with a sky-high interest rate, they can create a spiral of debt if people miss payments.

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) has now confirmed price cap rules, which promise to see the cost of borrowing fall and consumers never having to pay back more than double what they originally borrowed.

But with these new changes not coming into effect until January 2015, payday lenders could still hold a dangerous attraction as Christmas approaches and people find themselves short of cash.

Vince Maple, Labour group leader on Medway Council, welcomes the changes made by the FCA but does not think they go far enough in tackling

the issues that residents have had.

He said: "There are a number of countries where they have just outlawed payday lenders completely, or have far greater protection laws.

"The issue of payday lending on the high streets of Medway has been an issue Medway Labour have consistently campaigned on.

"Dozens of residents have come to me.

"People take on an initial loan and for various reasons they simply can't afford that loan. It's about making sure there's protection for people. People end up in a position where they have huge amounts of debt.

"The impact on people's lives can be huge."

He added: "Payday lenders have taken some quite shocking tactics, particularly in the run up to Christmas, with quite exploitative adverts.

"I hope with the FCA keeping a close eye on that industry now we will see less of that, and I haven't got people coming to me in lots of debt in January.

"Christmas has come early for the payday lenders because they haven't got these new restrictions in place, and



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the restrictions don't go far enough."

The new price cap rules will include an initial cost cap of 0.8 per cent per day for all high-cost, short-term credit loans, fixed default fees being capped at £15 to protect borrowers struggling to repay and a total cost cap of 100 per cent, which means borrowers must never have to pay back more in fees and interest than the amount borrowed.

Ian Driver, Thanet South's Green parliamentary candidate, is pleased to see these changes.

"I think it's long overdue. The payday loan companies are exploiting

some of the most vulnerable people in society and I think their actions should be regulated," he said.

"I welcome very, very tight regulation of the industry. It should have been done a long time ago. I would actually outlaw them altogether.

"We have got some of the lowest levels of poverty and deprivation in south east England. I have seen it through my surgery work as a councillor and before that manager of Thanet's Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB).

"I have seen over the years just how horrendous these organisations can make life for people by getting them into debt that they can never pay off."

He also believes that people can be more susceptible to payday lenders around Christmas time.

"That's always been the case," he said. "When I worked at the CAB, the weeks immediately after Christmas were always without fail the weeks when we started dealing with the greatest number of problems.

"People had gone that bit far and not really thought of the implications of taking out loans or maxing out their credit cards and not realising how much money they owed.

"Everybody wants to have a good

time at Christmas with friends and family. You're going to feel bad if you can't afford to get nice presents but there can be a cost, especially if you're not working.

"You try your best to do the right thing and that can get you into an awful lot of trouble.

"I'd tell anybody to think twice and look at the small print and look at your ability to pay because you could end up getting into a situation where it may be very, very difficult to repay."

While he believes that the way people think about money has changed somewhat, there is still a risk.

"I think more people are aware than they used to be, definitely, because so many people have had and are still having hard times.

"A lot are trying to count their pennies and shop wisely and people who have debts are trying to get rid of those debts. But these companies are advertising, they use every trick in the book."

Credit unions have been acknowledged by many as a safe alternative to payday lenders, for those people who need some help with their finances.

They are non-profit making co-operatives whose members can borrow from pooled deposits at low interest rates.

Pay day lenders have taken some quite shocking tactics, particularly in the run up to Christmas, with quite exploitative advertising

Vince Maple,
Medway Labour group leader

They encourage people to save with them first to build up a relationship.

Cllr Maple explained: "I think one of the positives that have come from this is the highlighting of credit unions.

"People do need to borrow money but they can do it in a way that's ethical and community focused.

"Credit unions have been around for decades and decades, they are trusted local community alternatives.

"If anybody is looking at borrowing money they should think about their finances very carefully and always consider the local credit

union as an ethical alternative.

"The worst thing you can do is bury your head in the sand. Speak to someone like the Citizens' Advice Bureau or Step Change, both of whom offer free, very good, impartial advice."

Cllr Driver agrees credit unions have huge benefits.

"I couldn't sing their praises highly enough, they do provide an excellent community service and I would advise people to look to them first," he said.

"They only lend small amounts of money but they lend at very good interest rates."

Chris Hunt, general manager at Kent Savers Credit Union, said of the FCA price cap rules: "They are good and bad. They are good in the sense that capping interest at 0.8 per cent per day means that they are going to be far, far cheaper than they ever were.

"With this new cap the APR is now 1,000 per cent. In some respects it is much better for the customer.

"But the other side of it is they are still ten times as expensive as we are.

"We just find it so strange that people accept that as that being the going price. Because these payday lenders are on television, people just assume that's what you're supposed to do."

PRAYING FOR A CHANGE IN ATTITUDES TO SPENDING AND LENDING

LAST month the Church of England announced a proposal for a network of savings clubs in primary schools, designed to give pupils as young as four practical experience of money management.

Set against a back-drop of a generation used to securing fast, cheap credit to buy whatever they wanted, whenever they wanted, the

slump in the financial markets and the resulting austerity drive has prompted a desire for future generations to re-adjust their attitudes and approach to spending.

Earlier this year the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, set up a task group on responsible credit and savings, following remarks about the danger of pay-day lenders.

The plans for the school savings clubs mark the latest stage in their work, coinciding with its new ToYourCredit website.

The archbishop said: "How we think about and use our money is central to a fulfilled and contented life.

"That is why I strongly support this exciting initiative to encourage children to develop positive

attitudes towards money and the habit of saving.

The website - www.toyourcredit.org.uk - features Murston Junior School in Sittingbourne which recently opened its own school bank with support from Kent Savers Credit Union, Murston Community Bank at All Saints Church, Murston, and the Diocese of Canterbury.

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Is grammar school campaign finally on the brink of success?

Campaigners in Sevenoaks have fought for years to get a grammar school in the town. Now they look set to finally be successful... but not for the boys. We take a look at the long-running selective saga

By Sarah Linney

sarah.linney@archant.co.uk

CAMPAIGNERS fighting to get a grammar school in Sevenoaks look set to finally have their wishes granted.

No official announcement has been made, but Tory government sources appear to have let it quietly be known that education secretary Nicky Morgan is expected to approve the plans next month.

But it will be seen by many as only half a solution as the proposed site will cater only for girls.

Although the Department for Education is remaining tight-lipped, saying only that a decision will be made "in due course", the Daily Telegraph reported this week a positive outcome was likely.

Sevenoaks is the only major town in Kent not to have a grammar school, meaning hundreds of pupils travel out of the town to schools in Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and even further afield.

In addition, the pressure on grammar school places in the west of the county is traditionally intense.

Parents keen to take advantage of the selective system in neighbouring East Sussex and the London boroughs, frequently apply for places, ensuring a regular race to land one of the grammar spots.

For parent Andrew Shilling, who has been leading the campaign to get a grammar school in Sevenoaks for the last three years, the news is welcome.

His two elder sons, aged 14 and 11, travel to the Judd School in Tonbridge each day.

"It's a 20 to 25-mile round trip. They spend at least two hours travelling a day, and they are quite young to be travelling that far," said Mr Shilling, a chartered accountant.

"They leave home at half past seven in the morning and get home at quarter to five. They are tired – the first term they just came home and collapsed on their beds. They sleep in quite a lot at weekends.

"They don't have as much time to do their homework and they don't socialise outside school as much.

"We just want a school in our town where our kids can go."

The problem has been that the grammar school system no longer exists in most parts of the country, and it has been illegal to build a new selective school since the 1960s.

But the Coalition government modified the law to allow existing grammar schools to expand and build annexes – essentially an extension of the school, with the same staff, curriculum and rules, but in a different location.

The Weald of Kent Grammar School, a girls' school in Tonbridge, is to act as the parent school for the Sevenoaks annex.

Last year it had hoped a bid to open



ON THE HORIZON: An artist's impression of the new grammar school in Sevenoaks

a mixed annexe in Sevenoaks would be given the go-ahead. But then-education secretary Michael Gove threw out the plans as it would, as a mixed school, in effect, be a new school and not an annexe (see box).

In a bid to get round the problem, bosses at the Weald of Kent even asked parents if it would consider becoming a mixed school to enable the Sevenoaks extension to go ahead. That was rejected.

One could be forgiven for wondering, of course, why the parents don't just send their children to a non-grammar school in Sevenoaks. But Mr Shilling says that is not an option.

"We don't have comprehensives here. In Kent we have high schools which don't have an academic curriculum," he said.

"Our local high school doesn't teach physics at A-level or more than one foreign language.

"If you have a high-performing child, you want them to go to the best school for their ability. If we have a grammar school system in Kent, I can't change that – but if you have that system, you have to cater for children who pass the 11-plus."

If it gets the go-ahead, the school will be built on the site of the former Wildernes boys school in Seal Hollow Road.

Planning permission was given the go-ahead this summer for the school and some £16million has been allocated for the work.

David Bower, chairman of governors at the Weald of Kent Grammar School, said the school had not heard anything about a decision.

But he said that if the annexe went ahead, it would have a knock-on beneficial effect for other children of grammar school ability in the Tonbridge area – as the school would be able to offer hundreds more places at its main site.

"We have put a lot of work into our application and as far as we can see we have crossed all the Ts and dotted all the Is," he said.

"If you take the premise that Kent has selective education then it seems unfair that Sevenoaks hasn't got a grammar school. The number of children who travel out of the town to attend other schools shows it has to be a

good thing. About 45 per cent of our pupils – about 500 girls – are from Sevenoaks, and of course there are other children from the town who travel to other schools.

"We are a very busy and successful grammar school and we no longer confine our intake to Kent only – we take girls on distance criteria in all the TN areas. So if this goes ahead, it creates more places for people in other parts of Kent, Surrey and Sussex."

But John Walder, the divisional secretary of the Kent branch of the National Union of Teachers, said he felt the opening of another grammar school would be a retrograde step.

"We do not approve of grammar schools. We don't think they are part of a sensible solution to what we need in this country," he said.

"Children should not be separated at the age of 11 on the basis of a judgment about their innate ability."

But campaigner Mr Shilling did not agree. He said: "I was from a poor background, and I went to a grammar school, then to Cambridge.

"If this bid isn't successful, we won't give up. We'll keep going. And we will be lobbying for a change in the law and to get the Tories to put in their manifesto they will allow new grammar schools."

LANDMARK RULING COULD LEAD TO A CHANGE IN THE LAW

THE grammar school system was abolished across most of Britain in the 1960s by the then-Labour government.

Under the leadership of education secretary Anthony Crosland, the Department for Education and Science informed local authorities in 1965 that it would not pay for any new school unless it was a comprehensive.

By the 1980s, most of the UK's grammar schools had closed or become comprehensives.

Kent and Medway, however, along with a few other education authorities, resisted the changes and the grammar school system survived in the county.

There are now some 164 grammar schools in England.

The Coalition Government changed the law in 2012 to allow existing grammar schools to expand.

After receiving a petition signed by more than 2,600 parents calling for such an establishment in Sevenoaks, Kent County Council voted in favour of their wishes – with the 1,200-pupil Weald of Kent Grammar School acting as the parent school. The building has already been given planning permission.

A bid for a mixed annexe in Sevenoaks was turned down on the ground that an annexe of a single sex school could not be mixed. So the latest bid is for a girls' school only

"The boys are left high and dry,

unless we can find a boys' grammar school that wants to open an annexe," campaigner Andrew Shilling admitted.

"It's a lot of work for a school." If the Sevenoaks plan gets the go-ahead, it is likely to see similar proposals accelerate elsewhere in the country.

Some Tory MPs are now calling for an expansion of grammar schools to be part of the party's manifesto, overturning rules that have existed for 50 years.

• What do you think? Do grammar schools promote social mobility or simply cater for the middle classes? Join the debate and share your views by writing in. Email: editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.

Public consultation begins into major electoral boundary review

For the first time in 14 years, Kent's county council electoral wards - known as divisions - are to be redrawn. And it's up to you how it's done. We ask what it involves and why it's important to engage

By Sarah Linney

sarah.linney@archant.co.uk

DO you feel you could be better represented on Kent County Council? Then you'll be pleased to know that you're being given the chance to have your say over how that could be done.

The county council's electoral wards are being re-drawn - and the people of Kent are being asked for their views on where the new boundaries should be.

The project is being undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, which is doing the same thing across the whole country.

The Commission is also recommending that the number of county councillors Kent has be cut from 84 to 81 under the new arrangements.

The aim of the redesign is to make sure each county councillor represents roughly the same number of voters - and that the wards (known as divisions for the county council) represent naturally distinct communities.

People are being asked to identify the area they consider to be their community, and where the shops and leisure facilities are that people in their community use.

Commission chairman Max Caller said: "We will take into account community identities as well as ensuring electoral equality for voters."

"If you have a view about which communities, parishes or neighbourhoods should be part of the same county division, or if you think a road, river or railway makes for a strong boundary between communities in your part of Kent, then we want to hear from you."

"Alternatively, if you're simply interested in the way the county is run, just log onto our website to explore our interactive maps and have your say."

"Your views will make a difference. We will carefully consider all evidence provided, whoever it is from and whether it applies to the whole of Kent or just a small part of the county."

Around 20 to 25 authorities across the UK are also being reviewed - at a minimum cost of around £50,000 per council, which adds up to at least £1 million across the country.

While the money comes from the commission rather than individual councils, the commission is still taxpayer-funded.

Graham Gibbens, the chairman of Kent County Council's electoral and boundary review committee, said the consultation was "an important part of the democratic process".

But should we, in these times of austerity, be spending such sums tinkering with lines on a map?

The commission's review manager Richard Buck says the answer is an unequivocal yes - because it ensures



HAVE YOUR SAY: If you feel your county council ward doesn't reflect your community, now's the time to speak up

that everyone's vote is worth the same.

The aim is to ensure there are no longer situations where one councillor represents the views and concerns of 2,000 people, while another, potentially in a neighbouring district, represents 4,000.

"The main thing we are looking at is ensuring people have a vote of equal weight," Mr Buck explained.

"The divisions get out of kilter over time, because of things like changes in population and developments, and we go in and try to equalise that. Kent has not been reviewed since 2002."

But the review is also about trying to ensure that the divisions reflect the communities people feel they are part of. "We are not looking to get the divisions absolutely spot on the same - there needs to be flexibility to reflect community identities and interests," Mr Buck said.

"The consultation process is critical in allowing us to get good evidence from people and a sense of where communities lie. That sort of information is invaluable to us."

"It's about what parishes would naturally go together in a division -



historic links can build a sense of community, but it's about how communities interact in the here and now and the links between them.

"Shared facilities, like doctor's surgeries and schools, provide a focus for a community."

The plan to get rid of three county councillors would also save Kent taxpayers £38,415 in annual allowances.

But it is a desire to bring Kent into line with other councils which is behind that proposal.

"We did a lot of liaison with Kent County Council over what it felt was the right number of councillors and where Kent stood in comparison with other county councils. We need to

KEA

as the main opposition party.

Political commentator Iain Dale, who lives in Pembury and presents a show every weekday on radio station LBC, agreed.

"Democracy has a price. If you're going to say this is too expensive, that's an argument for abolishing elections, because they cost so much," he said.

"It's nothing new. Boundaries have always been reviewed after a certain period."

"Consultations are there for a reason and if people have a view they should put it forward. People's views will count for something if they make them known - there are always villages that think they should be in a different area from a neighbouring village."

The consultation lasts until March 2.

To give your view or to find out more, write to The Review Officer (Kent), Layden House, 76-86 Turnmill Street, London EC1M 5LG, email reviews@lgbce.org.uk, or visit www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk or www.lgbce.org.uk.

Draft recommendations will be published in May, after which there will be a further chance to have your say.

The changes will then come into effect in time for the 2017 county council elections.

The Faversham and Mid Kent constituency, which was to be axed at the general election, has been re-prieved - for a few years.

In 2012 the Boundary Commission proposed the abolition of the constituency as part of a wider review which would have seen the number of parliamentary constituencies in England cut from 650 to 600, and all constituencies made roughly the same size.

The Faversham and Mid Kent constituency was created in 1997 when the seat of Faversham, which at that time included Sittingbourne and Sheppey, became two separate constituencies.

Under the new plans, Faversham and the surrounding villages would have been absorbed into a redrawn Canterbury constituency, with the rest of the constituency being absorbed into other neighbouring seats.

However, after a disagreement with their Conservative masters over reform of the House of Lords, the Liberal Democrats refused to support any of the Boundary Commission's proposals, and they were defeated in Parliament.

The review has now been postponed until 2018.

• What do you think? Share your views and join the debate.

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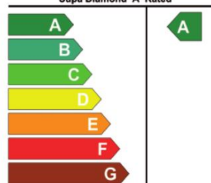
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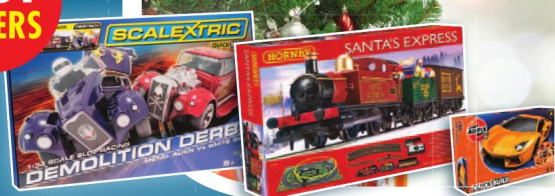


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MP Holloway on Ukip, war and principles

Adam Holloway has been a soldier in the Iraq wars, an investigative journalist and as a Conservative MP describes Ukip as “good people with sound views”. **Jamie Weir** goes to meet one of Kent’s most fascinating politicians

ADAM Holloway brings some baggage with him when it comes to speaking to the local media.

At times openly hostile and frequently doubting their motives, he has been known to end conversations, if indeed he speaks to you at all, in a manner which makes hostility seem too pleasant a word.

But then as a former investigative reporter who built up his reputation with the likes of Panorama, ITN, World in Action and the Sunday Times, it is perhaps forgivable that when once asked by one local reporter where he intended to spend his holiday, he simply retorted “f*** off” and told them to go and do some “proper journalism”.

Yet Adam Holloway, in person, is all rather disarming and charming.

He’s a tough, no-nonsense sort of MP, and one who doesn’t suffer fools gladly.

At 49, he’s already served with distinction in the British Army, in the Grenadier

Guards during both Iraq wars.

A man of principle, he admits he kissed goodbye to a ministerial career by his stance on the ever-contentious issue of Europe.

Frequently linked with a possible switch to Ukip – probably as a consequence – you’d be hard pushed to bet against him still rising up the ranks should the Conservatives cling to power next May.

But then Mr Holloway is not your normal MP. His motivations are very much of his own making.

“When I worked in TV in London,” he explains, as we meet in the office of a constituent he was visiting, “I used to deliberately park my car on double yellow lines at night when I was out.”

“Then I’d set my alarm to go off about 20 minutes before the traffic wardens could get my car with a ticket, and I’d dash across London. I used the fear of a ticket to motivate me into action.”

Unusual, perhaps, but different strokes for different folks, as they say.

As he turns up a little late for our meeting, he arrives in running shorts and a thread bare fleece.

“Do you want a typical ‘Tory boy’ interview,” he asks, “or just to be myself?”

Born in Faversham, his father was the Reverend Roger Holloway OBE, a man whose background included spells as a soldier, big game hunter, actor, international wine and spirit merchant and an Anglican priest.

He, too, had dabbled in politics, standing for the Tories in 1966 in east London, but losing out to Labour.

Following his death in 2010, aged 76, the obituary in the Daily Telegraph described him as “an Anglican priest like no other. Irascible and at times provocative, he was mischievously irreverent and often tempted to shock”.

Perhaps that’s where his son gets it from.

Adam Holloway attended the plush Cranleigh School as a boarder in Surrey, before going on to Magdalene College, Cambridge.

After being promoted to the

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OPEN: MP Adam Holloway chats to KoS reporter Jamie Weir

rank of captain in the Army, he found himself on the frontline as war was declared in the Middle East.

The impact of that would be the catalyst for his next career move.

"Unlike most MPs, I had never had any great desire to go into politics," he explains.

"At the end of the Gulf War in 2003, I came out of Iraq and got back and listened to the politicians in this country speaking on TV. There was this sudden realisation they were so far removed from the reality of where I had been, that I felt compelled to make a rush to go into politics."

Opting to stand for the Conservatives in Gravesham, he faced Chris Pond, the Labour candidate who had swept Jacques Arnold from the seat after ten years. Mr Pond had secured the seat as Tony Blair secured his historic landslide in 1997.

Mr Holloway's victory in 2005 saw him overturn a Labour majority of a little under 5,000 votes. It was a narrow victory, though, just 700 votes separated him and his red rival.

It was the first time since 1951 the seat had not been held by the winning party. By 2010, the Tory majority was closer to 10,000.

Although delighted with his 2005 election triumph, Mr Holloway was magnanimous in victory.

"The only thing that marred me winning the seat was defeating Chris Pond. I liked and respected him.

"The first thing I did after I was elected, that morning, with a terrible hangover, and exhausted after the count, was go to Chris' house with a bottle of brandy."

Mr Holloway admits he gets on well with politicians of all colours - including the Labour-controlled Grave-

sham Borough Council.

"I get on extremely well with the council leader, John Burden. I've always had a decent working relationship with him, and have always enjoyed spending time with him. In fact, I consider him to be a friend of mine."

So what of the elephant in the room? The ever-rising political powerhouse that is Ukip?

"Ukip are good people," he says, "with sound views that I would largely agree with. The strange thing about them is that they seem to be running candidates against Conservative's like me, who have long held similar views."

His stance on Europe has come at a price already. Having been appointed to the junior ministerial position of personal private secretary to Europe minister David Lidington, his decision to stick to his guns and defy the party whip on a vote over a referendum on Europe would force him to make a tough decision.

He explains: "I trashed my ministerial career over Europe."

"There was a backbench motion about a European referendum, and for eight years I had been telling people I felt there should be a referendum. All of a sudden, I was being told to say the opposite. I wasn't going to rebel against my constituents, which meant I had to resign."

"If a politician resigns," he elects, "essentially they won't get a ministerial position for that government in the future. I have similar views to Ukip, and agree with them on lots of stuff, so why would they run candidates against MPs like me?"

So is he not tempted to follow the likes of Mark Reckless and Douglas Carswell and jump from



FRONTLINE: Adam Holloway with opium plant in Afghanistan

blue to purple?

"Why would I defect? I'm going to do everything I can to save this country from having a Labour government."

"I'd much prefer a Conservative government which was in coalition with Ukip than with the Liberal Democrats, but that's not very likely when they keep putting up candidates

against Conservative seats."

It underlines the views of many that the 2015 election will be simply too close to call, but an almighty battle.

But then battles are something Mr Holloway is well versed with. It is a debate he's become embroiled in again amid mounting calls for the UK to become involved in tackling the

rise of Islamic State (IS/Isis) in the Middle East.

"I imagine I've spent more time in war zones than anyone else in parliament and was in Iraq for both wars," he says, "so I'm aware that war really, is something that happens when politics breaks down."

"What Parliament needs to understand is that military force is a tool, but it should be used as part of a series of political objectives. Isis took over a space the size of France in Syria and Iraq recently, barely firing a shot. They did that because people in the areas they went into accepted them."

"If we were to bomb Isis, it would just make the situation worse. What needs to be done is something to fix the political problems so the people don't accept Isis. There needs to be a clear plan."

He speaks from recent experience, having only recently returned from a visit to the Isis frontline in Iraq.

Certainly no one could accuse Mr Holloway of not being active in his role.

He said: "After the election win, by the time I sat down to my new parliamentary email address, I already had 3,000 in my inbox."

"That's one of the defining characteristics of the last ten years in office: the never ending work. This summer, I managed to borrow a friend's house in France to go on holiday. I decided that every day, I would do about six hours on the computer trying to empty my inbox."

"It literally took me, along with keeping up my daily emails which were still coming in, the entire holiday."

"When I finally emptied my inbox I

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“ Ukip are good people with strong views... I have similar views to Ukip and agree with them on lots of stuff, so why would they run candidates against MPs like me? ”

Adam Holloway

on Ukip's political motives

sent this pathetic email to my office just asking them to look at my inbox. I was so proud of it being empty I was just seeking some praise. You've just got so much it can be overwhelming at times.

"I've got quite a good reputation with constituents at getting back to

them quickly. Most people just think my office is really efficient, and it is, but actually I find that if I don't reply to something straight away it ends up buried."

He seeks to remain fit too. Having progressed from the 'parking on double yellows and racing the warden',

today he tries a more regulated approach to fitness.

"Because I spend so much time in front of the computer, I try to go for a run to fight off middle age. I like a run with a purpose, so frequently find myself running to visits with constituents or others."

Not that his running leads to a support of the nation's number one sport, "I hate football" he quips.

He does, however, have a soft spot for Ebbsfleet United, his local non-league club.

"I do love Stonebridge Road [Ebbsfleet's home ground] and the history

of parts of it. The turn-stiles at the ground are from the 1930s, and I remember going there to watch a match and just thinking about all of the people who would have walked through them, and the history which they had seen."

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VOTE: Have a say in who wins the much-coveted title

Back Kent finalists in the BBC Sports Personality of the Year

MILLIONS of viewers will tune in tonight to watch the BBC Sports Personality of the Year being crowned – and Kent has two hopefuls in the running for glory.

Golden girls Lizzy Yarnold and Charlotte Evans, both dazzled during the Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games in Sochi, Russia, earlier this year, and now both are on the shortlist.

Few will forget Miss Yarnold's remarkable triumph in the skeleton event – hurling herself at high speed on what looks like a glorified tea tray down an ice course. Her victory was Team GB's only gold throughout the Games.

And shortly after that, Charlotte Evans teamed up with visually impaired skier Kelly Gallagher in the alpine skiing Super-G to bring home a gold in the Paralympic event.

Miss Evans acts as a guide to Miss Gallagher in the remarkable event and both received medals. They are nominated as one in the BBC popularity poll.

But both Miss Yarnold and Miss Evans face a tough challenge to emerge from tonight's viewers' vote on top.

Other contenders include newly-crowned Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton and Open golf hero Rory McIlroy.

But we believe both our candidates are worthy of wider recognition. We take a look at our two stars and their rise to glory...

KOS SAYS...

LIZZY Yarnold and Charlotte Evans have been the county's stand-out sports stars this year with their golden exploits raising the nation's mood and inspiring an entire generation.

Not only do we support the pair of them, but we urge our readers to vote in the BBC Sports Personality of the Year award in a bid to get them the wider recognition they deserve.

So whether you think Lizzy Yarnold's skeleton success is worthy of your vote, or Charlotte Evans and Kelly Gallagher's speed to glory should get your support, be sure to vote for one of them tonight. Better still, vote for them both.

LIZZY YARNOLD MBE

IN A little over four minutes, Lizzy Yarnold went from local star to national heroine.

Yet her winning time on Valentine's Day this year at the Sochi Winter Olympics was merely the tip of an ice-berg of dedication, which had seen her rise up through the ranks and emerge as Great Britain's one and only gold medal winner at the 2014 Games.

Born in 1988, she grew up in West Kingsdown, near Sevenoaks. Educated at St Michael's Preparatory School, an independent school in Otford, she went on to become head girl at Maidstone Grammar School for Girls before heading off to university.

Inspired by watching Denise Lewis at the Sydney Games in 2000, the young Lizzy set her heart on the multi-discipline challenge of becoming a heptathlete. Then she wanted to pursue a sporting career in equestrian.

But after enrolling in a programme in 2008 designed to foster the talent of girls with a view to delivering future Olympic success – UK Sport's Girls-4Gold – she was introduced, instead, to the somewhat bizarre challenge of the skeleton.

She proved to have a natural talent to the somewhat dare-devil sport. Within five years she was already

making an impact on the global stage.

Inspired by Amy Williams, who won gold in the skeleton at the 2010 Vancouver Winter Games, she timed her run to form to perfection, winning the World Cup event in the months leading up to the big event and then onto the global level provided by the Sochi Games.

Hotly tipped as one of our genuine medal hopefuls, she did not let us down.

Before the closing ceremony had even taken place, she had been flown back to the UK to get a taste of her new found national fame and a place on the Jonathan Ross TV chat show.

Even her family, who had travelled out to Sochi and fielded media questions about their daughter's triumph, became minor stars.

Channel 4 comedy show The Last Leg's highlighting of her father Clive's distinctive moustache even saw #clivesmoustache trending on Twitter.

She finally returned home to a hero's welcome. A special open-top bus ride was arranged from Sevenoaks to her home in West Kingsdown, stopping off at schools along the route for children to meet the rising star and see the cherished gold medal.

A star had truly been born. Since then her popularity has continued.

She's had a packed calendar of speaking engagements and just last week went to Windsor Castle to meet the Queen and pick up an MBE to recognise

her success. Currently in Lake Placid as she starts the defence of her world title, her ambition to not only repeat her success at the next Winter Games but build on her reputation in the sport, remains undimmed.

She explains: "Winning in Sochi was a dream come true – but there are still so many things that I want to achieve in skeleton. I know I can be a better athlete."

"It was such an honour to learn I was being awarded an MBE."

"It was so special to receive the award from the Queen, she was very kind and so knowledgeable about skeleton racing and the Winter Olympics, which was lovely to chat about – it helped calm my nerves."

As for tonight's BBC prize? "It is such an honour to be nominated," she says.

"I can remember watching it just before Christmas when I was little – it's one of those events where the whole family sat around the TV to watch the cool montages of all the year's sporting action and see who won."

"There are so many incredible sportsmen and women on the list this year – it is great that the UK continues to do well in so many sports – and to think I have been nominated among them is a bit surreal."

"So I hope everyone enjoys watching the show on Sunday – if you are voting then I would really appreciate the support."

For now, though, her focus is on the eight-race Viessmann FIBT World Cup. It consists of eight races across two continents and seven countries.

After Lake Placid, the event will be moving to Calgary in Canada, and there will be two further events in Germany, two in France, one in Austria, before ending at Sochi – the scene of her triumphant win.

Few would bet against her winning again.



Turn to page 20

CHARLOTTE EVANS MBE

CHARLOTTE Evans has become one half of a now rather famous double-act. As if to underline just how far Paralympic athletes have come in recent years, Charlotte Evans and Kelly Gallagher's success in the Super-G alpine event at Sochi in the Winter Paralympics made front page news.

For Ms Evans, 23, from Chatham, it was an odd role to fulfil. As the able-bodied partner to visually impaired Ms Gallagher, she has to help her partner circumnavigate a terrifying course at speeds of up to 100km/h.

But it could have been a moment that never happened, after Ms Evans, of Rochester, suffered a nasty knee injury which threatened her career.

A keen skier since her childhood she started developing her skills by going to the Chatham Ski Centre to practice every week, moving on to snow at the age of 14.

She combined her high-speed talents with her studies at Rochester Grammar School and then MidKent College.

She was part of the England alpine ski team by 2009 and

English overall champion before her knee was injured while competing at the British Championships, forcing her off the snow for the next nine months.

During her rehabilitation she worked as a coach before being asked to get involved with the British disabled ski team in guiding Ms Gallagher, who has since become a "friend for life".

She said her decision to team up was "the best decision I ever made".

Speaking to KoS she said: "My family said, just give it a go and just try it, and I have been doing it ever since."

"It changed how I think about racing and who I am as a person."

"Skiing is quite an individual sport and you can become quite isolated in yourself. Now I'm part of a team."

"Being able to give someone else the chance to fulfil their dream is the highlight."

"I am getting to do what I love, but getting someone else to be able to do their own dream too."

"It's one of those

relationships where you are together all the time."

"We are very different personalities and I think at the beginning it's very difficult to define which role is which, but now it's easy to work together."

Ms Evans and Ms Gallagher have worked together since November 2010 and after just four weeks went to the World Championships and scooped a silver and bronze medal, making them the first British alpine skiers to win a medal at the event.

Since their Paralympic win they have both been awarded an MBE for their services to paralympic sport.

"That was a massive day for us," Ms Evans said. "It doesn't feel real."

"We have been in schools to talk to the students and I have really enjoyed that. You're able to inspire people, whether it's through sport or not."

"It's really positive and people want to know about getting involved."

Now they face another tough test – and the BBC Sports Personality of the Year award.

"It's pretty amazing," reflects Ms Evans.

"We didn't really expect any of it. We went to Sochi thinking we have got a goal, we have got to get the medal we want."

"The aftermath has just been a crazy road. Every day that something new happens I think it can't get any better and then it does."

GOLDEN GIRLS:

Charlotte Evans and Kelly Gallagher

Picture: SUZANNE KNIGHT.

HOW TO VOTE...

The BBC Sports Personality of the Year award is televised live tonight, Sunday, on BBC One with extensive coverage on both BBC Radio 5 Live and on the BBC's website. It starts at 8pm.

The show comes live from the SSE Hydro arena in Glasgow.

Voting will be open for a short period during the show with the numbers being revealed during the show. The winner will be announced on the night. There will also be an option to vote online.

The short-list, compiled by a select group of judges, comprises of:

- Rory McIlroy (golf)
- Gareth Bale (football)
- Max Whitlock (gymnastics)
- Lewis Hamilton (motorsport)
- Adam Peaty (swimmer)
- Lizzy Yarnold (skeleton)
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Business Review 2014



Family firm sure to be prepared for Indian Scout buzz

SINCE the 1960s, Robinsons Foundry has been in the motorcycle industry.

They started in Broadstairs, acquiring a Suzuki franchise in the 1970s which led to them becoming the biggest Suzuki parts supplier in the UK, and moved to their current site on Broad Oak Road, Canterbury, in 1990.

The company's growth has continued year-on-year, and they now sell a selection of Victory, Indian, Piaggio, Aprilia, Suzuki, Vespa and Moto Guzzi motorcycles.

The family-run business has gone from strength to strength, and their ever-growing showroom offers everything from a 50cc Scooter to a full blown 1800cc Tourer.

And they now have an exciting new model which is soon to be launched.

They will be offering the 2015 Indian Scout in the New Year.

The 100hp middle-weight cruiser combines classic heritage with modern features.

It uses a cast aluminium frame, with a low 643mm seat height, 1562mm wheelbase and 135mm of ground clearance.

The bike was shown at this year's

Motorcycle Live Show at the NEC in Birmingham and received a glowing review on the website www.cycleworld.com, which began: "The Scout rocks ... It completely satisfies on every level."

And it has already created quite a buzz, with orders pouring in and people showing a lot of interest in the new model.

"We have had so much interest in this bike!" said sales manager Ben Godfrey.

"I have been here for 12 years and we have never had this much interest in a launch.

"It's a model that was Indian-produced from 1920 through the 1940s.

"This 2015 model is a whole new bike, with a new engine; it's a totally new machine.

"It's quite a bit smaller than the rest of the Indian Chief current range."

And at £10,395, it could be a more affordable option for some customers.

"It opens up sales prospects for quite a few more people," Mr Godfrey added.

To find out more about the launch of the 2015 Indian Scout, please call Robinsons Foundry on 01227 378430.

For more information about other motorcycles the company has to offer please visit www.robinsonsfoundry.co.uk



INDIAN SCOUT: Bike has aroused "huge interest"

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Business Review 2014

Make the perfect first impression by sending out a clear message

IT ONLY takes a split second for someone to form an opinion of us: the way we carry ourselves in face to face communication, our use of tone, gesture and listening skills all paint a picture.

Even an email that carries the wrong tone or punctuation can immediately send out a negative impression, which can be a problem in day to day life, but also in specific situations like job interviews where speaking with ease and eloquence can make all the difference.

With this in mind, the English Language Academy at GAU Canterbury are now offering courses, that can be studied either full or part time, that focus on accurate use of the basics and using the English language.

The courses, which are validated by Open Awards, teach functional English skills to deal with everyday business situations, to prove to employers you have the skills they are looking for.

Everybody learns differently, with some people responding better to written assignments and others being more practical. Because of this, they use a wide range of



PROGRESS: Get that job you want by ensuring you harness the power of the English language

assessment approaches including written assignments, reports, timed class work, practical work, discussion and presentations.

The academy staff are Chris Hopson, Niamh Trundle, John Wigmore and Isabelle Ramsden, who have experience in training in Europe, Asia and South America including in-house and bespoke courses with postgraduate qualifications in linguistics, international relations and

teacher-training.

Mr Hopson says: "We're delighted that the English department at GAU Canterbury was recently granted Accreditation by the British Council for the quality of our English teaching."

"Our aim is to provide those seeking work, those who want to gain additional career skills or those who plan to continue their education with the best possible interpersonal, verbal and written

skills that will serve them throughout their life.

"It's not just qualifications and knowledge that are key to success, but the ability to stand out in the way you represent yourself and your employers."

Credits are earned for every module taken, building up to the course awards.

They also provide in-house training for business looking for staff-development.

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**Business Review
2014**

Our passion: Helping make your dreams a rewarding reality

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That is the motto of the Academy for Distance Learning (ADL). Offering 650 courses in 18 disciplines, from accounting to horticulture, they are hugely passionate about helping students get to where they want to be.

The courses offer a choice of three learning methods and students can access their coursework online, by CD or through correspondence.

The internationally recognised and accredited courses can help people change careers, progress in their current field, or enrich their learning development. What's more, students from pre- and post-university and those continuing education can learn new skills which will help them grow or change their career direction, without having to leave their current employment in the meantime.

Each ADL student is assigned a qualified and field experienced tutor, who supports them throughout their flexible course and beyond and offers as much or as little individual contact as required.

Tutors will give detailed feedback on coursework, providing ideas, motivation and enthusiasm to help you progress.

At the end of each lesson there is a

practical task to complete, helping students to develop their skills through hands-on activities.

And for those who enjoy sharing the learning experience with others, the ADL discussion forum can connect you to other students from around the world.

ADL's personal approach undoubtedly sets them apart from the rest.

They want the best for each and every student who learns with them.

"We treat all our students as individuals and not by their student IDs," said academy registrar Amanda White.

"I am still talking to students from four years ago. You get to know them on a personal level."

They currently support over 1,000 active working/studying students of the 50,000 who've been through the system.

Since they began in 2008, they have seen an impressive growth, with a number of employers enrolling employees in courses and international students signing up.

They are offering a valuable stepping stone to a brighter future.

For more information about ADL and the courses on offer, call 01227 789649 or visit www.ADLonlinecourses.com.



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Throughout December they are also offering day trips to London from just £10.

Passenger service is of paramount importance to Airport Connections, and their on site management team carries out rigorous inspections of the vehicles every four weeks.

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They provide package coach trips, so travellers can enjoy either four, five or six nights in the idyllic location.

Their chosen hotel is situated right on the seafront, with stunning views of the beaches, and it is just a short walk away from the town centre and Tolcarne Beach.

Its facilities include a heated indoor swimming pool, Jacuzzi, sauna and a ballroom offering entertainment throughout the

year. There is also a beauty salon, games room and enclosed terrace and patio for guests to enjoy.

The hotel, along with a delicious dinner and breakfast, is included in the price of the trip.

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Travellers will also be taken to Padstow, known for its good seafood and pretty coastline.

In the new year, the company will also be offering trips to Peppa Pig World, Chessington World of Adventures, Cadbury World and Legoland.

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The bungalows come in different sizes but even the smallest have two double bedrooms, a living area, kitchen and bathroom, plus a private garden and a

parking bay beside the house.

The park is a private estate so security is high – there is a live-in warden as well as CCTV.

Just a five-minute walk away is Birchington village centre, where you'll find shops, banks, building societies and doctor's and dentist's surgeries – and the beautiful Minnis Bay is just five minutes' drive away.

The park is easily accessible by public transport as well as by car – the mainline train station at Birchington (also within walking distance) is on the high speed line to St Pancras as well as the line to London Victoria.

No wonder Court Mount is a former winner of the Best Park in Great Britain award from Tower Gate Insurance.

"We have so many people who are really keen to come and live here, but can't sell their houses," Mr Saunders added.

The family is also building a new development of 43 luxury lodges, plus a new club and restaurant, at its 5-star Foxhunter Holiday Park.

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SME PARADISE: Basepoint's options are ideal for small to medium-sized firms

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meaning you can avoid stress and costly legal fees. You can even move in on the day you sign up!

The flexibility of Folkestone Basepoint cannot be underestimated, as one Hythe business owner discovered last year.

"We had someone who was completely flooded. They came to see us at noon on Tuesday and by 5pm they were moved in with broadband," said centre manager Lorraine May.

And once you're in, you can relocate within the centre to match your needs and enjoy the efficient, friendly business support and advice available from the centre staff. If they can't answer your questions, they will find you someone who can.

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Bespoke designs as everyone's kitchen needs are unique

IAN Pennick Interiors of Canterbury offers high quality work, good advice and a personal approach.

They have been providing fitted kitchens, bathrooms and bedrooms in Canterbury and the surrounding areas across Kent for over 30 years.

They are proud members of Checkatrade and receive consistently good reviews.

They are now expanding the business even further and will be putting the finishing touches to their new showroom in January.

Owner Ian Pennick said: "We are expanding the business due to a fantastic year and taking on more kitchen, bathroom and bedroom installers.

"We have got a new dedicated kitchen designer, Paul Brooks, who also has 30 years' experience in the kitchen industry, starting in January."

Whatever your budget, Ian Pennick Interiors can help provide the perfect bedroom, bathroom or kitchen for your home.

They offer a free design service, and will visit a customer's home either during the day or evening depending on convenience.

They will discuss what kind of home improvements you want and look at the space you have available before designing

your dream kitchen on a sophisticated CAD program.

Customers will be invited into the showroom where they will see their design on a big screen.

"You can see your kitchens, bedrooms and bathrooms come to life," said Mr Pennick.

Quality is highly important to them, and each kitchen, bedroom or bathroom is tailored to the property and budget.

"We offer very bespoke kitchens and get around all unforeseen situations," explained Mr Pennick.

"All our kitchens are made to order. Everything is as individual as you want it to be."

Once you have chosen what you would like, they will take care of the rest.

"From start to finish we project manage everything, so that you don't have to worry about getting any other trades in," he said.

"Being a fully time-served installer gives me an edge over other companies."

To see what Ian Pennick Interiors have to offer you, you can visit their studio in Canterbury Road, Herne Bay, next to Canterbury Garden Centre, without an appointment. Or visit www.ianpennick.co.uk or call 01227 283850 for free advice.



MOOD: Creating the perfect environment

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Studio adj to
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**Business Review
2014**

Get a room with a view of the sea and an experience to remember

AN IDYLIC location right on Hythe seafront, huge split level rooms with balconies and super-attentive service?

It must be the Stade Court Hotel in Hythe – and what's more, if you stay at this friendly 3-star between now and the end of February, you can take advantage of an incredible special offer: two nights, breakfast both mornings, and dinner one night for just £96.

All rooms have free wifi (available throughout the hotel), a flatscreen satellite TV, tea, coffee and biscuits, an en-suite bathroom with toiletries and an armchair, as well as large windows filling the room with natural light and, in most cases, a balcony.

About 15 rooms are split-level – with the balcony on the upper level, or if it's a family room, two single beds upstairs and a double bed downstairs. You can even bring your pets.

There's also a restaurant with panoramic views of the sea (there's a children's menu here for little ones), a bar and free on-site parking.

The Best Western Stade Court Hotel's restaurant serves a quality range of dishes using the freshly



SEAVIEW: The prime location for a prime quality hotel

caught fish and the finest local produce.

It takes great pride in our reputation for outstanding hospitality and the most discerning of guests are catered for.

For a nominal fee, guests can also use the spa and gym at the nearby Imperial Hotel, which has a heated indoor pool, sauna, steam room and treatment rooms and is just ten minutes' walk away.

"Our rooms combine luxury and

tranquillity – and are spacious compared with other hotels in Hythe," explained general manager Sandeep Chawla.

"But it's the personal attention we give our guests that really sets us apart. We want to make sure your stay is as enjoyable, relaxing and memorable as possible – and fulfil all your wishes, however big or small.

"Our friendly staff will go out of their way to cater to your needs."

The hotel is within easy driving

distance of Dover, Deal and Walmer castles, the lovely medieval town of Sandwich, and the Battle of Britain Memorial at Capel-le-Ferne.

And with the Channel Tunnel just ten minutes' drive away and Dover ferry terminal 20 minutes away, it's perfectly placed as a stopover if you're heading to the continent...although, frankly, with everything we've mentioned on offer, why would you want to leave?

Best Western Stade Court Hotel

West Parade
Stade Street
Hythe, CT21 6DT

Tel: 01303 268263

Web:
www.stadecourthotel.co.uk

Email
stadecourt@bestwestern.co.uk

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Creating exciting job opportunities with a course at college

IMAGINE spending your day at college building a house, cooking in a restaurant or learning the ropes on an Airbus.

At Sussex Coast College in Hastings, we don't do dusty old classrooms. Here you learn by doing – and doing exactly as you would in a real workplace.

There really is a space in the middle of the Ore Valley campus where students get to build a house – along with a garage, gym, restaurant and two hair and beauty salons, all functioning one hundred per cent as commercial establishments.

And yes, there's also that Airbus A320 fuselage where our travel and tourism students get a taste of working life onboard a plane.

"Our students are learning from professional tutors in a professional, real-life working environment," says Justin Rollings, head of marketing and communications.

"This is not an extension of school. It's a precursor to employment. There is a level of responsibility placed upon the students which you wouldn't normally get in some further education colleges.

"Our students are very successful in the workplace. A lot of our travel and tourism students have gone on to work for BA,

easyJet and Ryanair."

Our cutting-edge new campuses were opened in 2010 (although the college itself has been established since the 1950s) and have proved a hit, with student numbers varying between 4,000 and 6,000 each year.

Our excellent location is another plus – the Hastings campus is literally opposite the entrance to the train station, and the Ore Valley campus is also three minutes' walk from Ore Valley station.

The range of vocational, A-level, degree, HND and HNC courses we offer is huge and includes construction, engineering, music technology, ICT, art, health and beauty, hospitality, catering, sport and more.

It's not all about work, though – the strong extra curricular programme includes trips (everywhere from skiing to Snowdonia), camping, charity events, sports and clubs.

And there's strong support for students who need it, in whatever way they need it – the college is even Autism Accredited by the National Autistic Society.

To find out more, come to our open day on January 15 from 5pm to 8pm at our Station Plaza campus in Station Approach, Hastings, call us on 01424 442222 or email info@sussexcoast.ac.uk.



CHANCES: Sign up to open doors for the future

Sussex Coast College Hastings

Station Approach
Hastings
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Email:
info@sussexcoast.ac.uk

Web:
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Business Review
2014

Let us help you in selecting your perfect sonic experience at home

FOR many people, listening to music or watching a favourite film is a very emotional experience.

At Home Media, in Union Street, Maidstone, we know that.

We know that when you come to us looking for a music or cinema system for your home, you are not buying a product. Whether you choose a complete hi-fi system, some speakers, a CD player, a turntable, a streaming device or even a home cinema, you are buying an experience. We have a wide selection of products available for demonstration to help you make an informed choice that's right for you.

To say we're passionate about what we do is like saying Madonna has had a few hits. We're completely committed to helping people find the product that's right for them – not the product that we want to sell (unlike some retailers) – and we take pride in putting in the time and effort needed to ensure you're happy with what you've bought, instead of just making a quick sale.

We're not swayed by what's in fashion, what's had good reviews, or what other retailers are promoting because it's easy. We keep a minimal



SOUNDS GOOD: Home Media will help you find your home's perfect fit

amount of items in stock for a very good reason – we don't want to sell our customers something just because it's in our storeroom. The only product we want to sell is the one that's right for you.

We ask questions. We've probably got more questions than you.

We want to get to the heart of what's going to suit you and it's not unusual for us to spend hours with our customers, letting them discuss and try out different options.

We'll ask you about the size of the room the product's going to go in and the décor...we can even arrange a visit to your home so we can look at where it would go and see if we can make any useful suggestions.

We've heard our customers refer to us as a consultancy rather than a retailer... and we can see where they're coming from. We ask people the questions they don't think to ask themselves – so we can guide

them to the right solution.

We pride ourselves on our truly bespoke service, our attention to detail and our friendly, honest approach.

And it must be working, because we know our customers trust us, come back to us and recommend us to their friends.

A lot of the time they become our friends. Because they know we always want to do the best for them – and that we genuinely love doing it.

Home Media

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Maidstone ME14 1ED

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Confidence and fun by taking a step onto the big stage

HOW would you like the chance to perform on stage as part of a professional production – and to grow in confidence in a way you never thought possible?

At Stagecoach Canterbury, young people don't just have the opportunity to learn to dance, sing and act – it's a great way to build confidence, make friends and discover hidden talents.

Classes are open to anyone aged between four and 18 and are all taken by highly trained professional performers – singing teacher Pete Moody, for example, has coached pop stars and West End performers as well as Stagecoach pupils across the country.

And the hard work pays off. Last September, 60 boys and girls from the school took part in the professional touring production of Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat at the Marlowe Theatre.

Another 30 performed in Evita in March and April, including one girl who was the main child soloist – and another pupil is to play Young Fiona in Shrek in March.

In addition, 68 pupils have applied to LAMDA in the past two years and all have been accepted – with 66 achieving a merit

or distinction.

"They love the experience of performing in a professional production and being on stage in front of a live audience," principal Alan Goodwin said.

"We also had 18 parents as extras in Evita – they got the biggest thrill of all."

Class sizes are restricted to 18 so the children get as much individual attention as possible – and the school is full, or very nearly, each year.

"We take children of all abilities – there is no audition," Alan adds.

"And we give them all a two-week taster so they can see what it's like before they enrol.

"We have children who have been here for nine, ten, eleven years who don't want to leave and are only leaving because they are past the age when they can continue!"

Classes are held on Saturdays and last three hours (an hour for each of the three skills) for children aged seven and over, and an hour and a half (three half hours) for four to six-year-olds.

They run from 10am to 1pm or from 2.30pm to 5.30pm (9.30am to 11am for four to six-year-olds). For more information call Stagecoach Canterbury on 01227 764110.

Stagecoach Canterbury

Simon Langton Grammar
School for Girls
Old Dover Road
Canterbury

Tel: 01227 764110

Web:
www.stagecoach.co.uk



HAPPY: Young performers enjoying the spotlight

Enrolling Now for January 2015



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www.stagecoach.co.uk/ashford

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www.stagecoach.co.uk/canterbury

Age 4 – 18 – Fun confidence-building educational
classes in acting, singing and dance.



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Business Review 2014

Picture perfect eatery with a view over top marina's golden sunsets

SET in an unrivalled and atmospheric position on the Harbour Arm in Ramsgate, the Royal Harbour Brasserie offers beautiful scenery and a relaxed atmosphere.

Their unique position provides both a panoramic view of the coastal town's Marina and the chance to see France on a clear day.

The dramatic location is an original and exciting place for a meal or meeting, with Ramsgate's Georgian houses framing the Marina and creating a stunning backdrop to the harbour.

Those hoping to dine el fresco will be delighted with the extensive terrace, the best place to view a sunset in Ramsgate.

Diners can unwind under the stars at night or watch the sun rise in the morning.

The Brasserie is friendly and accommodating and caters for everyone, whether they are looking for a delicious meal, tea and freshly ground Kent coffee, or breakfast to set them up for the day.

They have been recommended in the 2014 Good Food Guide thanks to their simple but fresh menu, with each dish beautifully prepared using local ingredients.



IDEAL LOCATION: Looking for a meeting venue with a difference? Then this could be perfect for you

They are well known for their delicious local seafood, all of which is reasonably priced.

"We smoke our own fish, pick our own vegetables and make our own desserts," said owner Adrian Mowl.

It has been an emotional journey for the Royal Harbour Brasserie, which was transformed from an empty shell to the French inspired building that it is today, after Mr Mowl took on the challenge of reopening it.

It has been going from strength to strength, with the historical location evoking powerful memories for many of the customers who visit, and it has even been featured in a film.

And Mr Mowl will be expanding this success, with plans to open a new fish and beer bar in Broadstairs in the Spring.

As well as offering a great place to eat, the Brasserie is also available for functions and has a

variety of wedding packages which give people the chance to have their special day by the sea with a personally designed menu and the terrace to enjoy.

Whatever you are looking for, they have something for you.

The Royal Harbour Brasserie is located at the end of the East Pier, Ramsgate Seafront, Royal Harbour Parade.

For more information contact us (details on the left).

Royal Harbour Brasserie

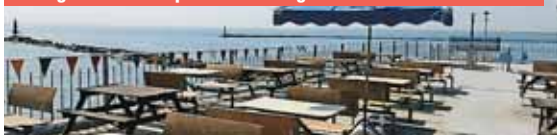
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Put the spotlight on your child's talents at top acting school

WHAT if your Saturday hobby could take you on stage in the West End or in the Royal Albert Hall?

Stagecoach Ashford gives young people the opportunity to learn to dance, sing and act – and is a great way to build confidence, make friends and discover hidden talents.

Classes are open to anyone aged between four and 18, of any ability.

They last three hours (an hour for each of the three skills) for children aged seven and over, and an hour and a half (three half hours) for four to six-year-olds.

All the lessons are taken by professional teachers – drama coach Simon Thomas has appeared in *Phantom of the Opera* and *Legally Blonde* in the West End, and early years teacher Amanda Sim has appeared in *Annie*.

"It's about both education and having fun," principal Colleen Foster explains.

"We have former students who are working in the industry – performing in the West End or working in stage management – but it can also just be a hobby.

"Many children come because they enjoy it and make friends; they love the excitement and the challenge, and being with a group of like-minded young people.

"There is also an agency attached to Stagecoach – as we have more than 600 schools worldwide – and in most West End shows there will be a Stagecoach person."

Twice a year, the children stage a performance in St Mary's Church in the town centre and they also perform at regional theatres throughout the year – as well as an annual performance in the West End.

This year they will also be performing at the Royal Albert Hall.

"The accent is on training – how to sing, dance and act," Colleen explains.

"So it is on the children, not the script. When we put on a performance we try to make sure everyone is involved as much as possible.

"It seems to build children's confidence as they overcome challenges and get good at what they are doing. We have had some really shy children, and it has brought them out of themselves – they surprise themselves with what they can achieve."

Stagecoach Ashford operates out of the North School in Essella Road. Spaces are already filling up fast for upcoming terms – particularly for some of the age groups – so don't delay.

Call 01233 611696 today.

Stagecoach Ashford

North School
Essella Road
Ashford

Tel: 01233 611696

Web:
www.stagecoach.co.uk



ALL SMILES: Stagecoach students treading the boards

Enrolling Now for January 2015



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Age 4 – 18 – Fun confidence-building educational
classes in acting, singing and dance.



**QUALITY
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Business Review 2014

Fire your imagination with a range to inspire and excite at city store

NEW to Wincheap in Canterbury is the beautiful new showroom **Hearth & Home**.

The store is arranged over two floors and filled with an abundance of inspiration for the home.

The ground floor is dedicated to working woodstoves including models by Chesney's and the Danish brand Hwam for a contemporary option.

Most of the fireplaces are displayed in unique settings along with a wide selection of decorative accessories and unusual gift ideas.

Hearths and mantles can be made to order and delivery and installation can be arranged if required.

The first floor houses more fireplace settings with an interesting and varied choice of lighting, lampshades and soft furnishings.

There are often items on promotion and the team are constantly sourcing new and interesting items.

The new state of the art Aga Total Control 5 oven cooker takes pride of place in the centre of the ground floor showroom and is used for Aga demonstrations and regular baking where customers



IDEAL HOMES: Let Hearth & Home light up your home with stunning designs and practicality

can help themselves to the 'Bake of the Day' whilst they browse.

The well stocked Aga cookshop carries a wide range of Aga Cookware in stock and orders can be taken for specific items.

Our friendly team is on hand to welcome you and offer assistance or advice with excellent knowledge

and a wealth of ideas to suit your requirements.

Owner Debbie Thomas believes the shop's success is as much down to the excellent customer care as the gorgeous range of products.

"We have such a breadth of products on offer.

"The home interiors products are

constantly changing – there is always something new and always something on promotion," she explained.

Drop into the store at 31 Wincheap, Canterbury to see the range or call Hearth & Home on 01227 780267 to receive more information.

Hearth & Home

31 Wincheap
Canterbury
Kent

Tel: 01227 780267



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22nd May 2015	4	26th May 2015	HB	Fri-Tues	£390	£565
7th June 2015	6	13th June 2015	HB	Sun-Sat	£480	£785
21st June 2015	6	27th June 2015	HB	Sun-Sat	£480	£785
17th July 2015	4	21st July 2015	HB	Fri-Tues	£425	£645
10th Aug 2015	6	16th Aug 2015	HB	Mon-Sun	£510	£845
31st Aug 2015	4	4th Sept 2015	HB	Mon-Fri	£425	£685
13th Sept 2015	6	19th Sept 2015	HB	Sun-Sat	£480	£785
23rd Sept 2015	4	27th Sept 2015	HB	Wed-Sat	£425	£650

These prices include: Transport to and from Newquay, Hotel incl Dinner, Bed and Breakfast. Full Day Trip (incl Entrance Fee) to **EDEN PROJECT** in St. Austell, Cornwall and Half Day trip to **PADSTOW**.



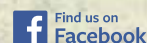
Padstow



Eden Project

Our chosen Hotel is situated right on the seafront in Newquay with its stunning beaches. It is just a 10 minute walk from Newquay Town Centre and just 200 yards from Tolcarne Beach. There are plenty of facilities at the hotel, including a heated indoor swimming pool, jacuzzi and sauna, as well as an enclosed outdoor terrace and patio. Also at the hotel is a beauty

salon and games room. There is a coffee shop which offers a selection of light snacks and refreshments. The hotel has a main ballroom which offers entertainment throughout the year and has a large dance floor and bar, it's a popular spot each evening and a perfect place to relax and unwind whilst enjoying your holiday in this glorious part of the south-west.



To Book or for more information call: **Connections4youLtd on 01843 823007 / 823700**

www.connections4you.net

Couple put their wedding on ice

By Molly Kersey

molly.kersey@archant.co.uk

THE first dance at a couple's wedding is always an important one.

As man and wife they take to the floor and demonstrate their love for one another as they sway to music applauded – and then joined – by their friends and family.

But when Lynette Matthews, 33, and James Pickard, 34, from Sittingbourne, tied the knot last weekend, they decided that simply taking to the dance floor was a little too simple.

So having had the ceremony and enjoyed a celebration for their nearest and dearest at Hotel du Vin in Tunbridge Wells, the happy couple proved, quite literally, that stepping out in marriage is a case of skating around issues, and making sure you're there to pick your partner up when they stumble.

Because they lead their party down the slopes of the picturesque Calverley Grounds which neighbour the park and to the town's temporary winter ice rink.

And there they and their guests mingled with members of the public who had pulled their skates on for a quick festive spin around the rink.

Explains the new Mrs Pickard: "I lived in Tunbridge Wells for a while and have always been Christmas mad."

"I've been to the ice rink a few times and thought, wouldn't it be amazing to do something different for our wedding."

Remarkably, despite having only gone skating a few times before, they conducted themselves in some style.

"Well we didn't fall over, which was impressive," Mrs Pickard joked.

"James has only done it a few times, and I have only done it a few times as well. It was magical. It was so Christmassy and everyone absolutely loved it."

Mrs Pickard admitted she was unsure how many of the guests would like to join them on the ice but said that a lot of them were happy to get into the spirit of the occasion.

"We absolutely loved the ice skating as did all the guests who joined in and the ones who watched," she said. "Some 35 people got involved and all wore their Christmas jumpers."

The couple, who live in Bapchild, near Sittingbourne, met through work 18 months ago.

And perhaps unsurprisingly, as they jetted off on their honeymoon it was to enjoy another festive event.

"We are off to Austria to go and see the Christmas markets," she explained to KoS.

"My parents have got a place there so we go there quite a lot anyway."

"It's a lovely atmosphere around Christmas."

"We are going to drink some mulled wine and make the most of it."

The Tunbridge Wells ice rink has once again proved a major hit for the west Kent town this winter.

Introduced several years ago in a bid to pull visitors into the very heart



SKATE FUN: The happy couple take to the ice. Pictures courtesy of Samuel Photography.

of the town in order for them to skate and shop.

Expanding year on year, the council-run attraction has proved a hit with the crowds with a host of facilities around the rink offering gift ideas and food and drink opportunities.

It's open until January 4.



Chalkwell

DayBreaks by Coach



Royal Albert Hall Christmas Sing-a-long

20th December 2014

£62.00



Disney on Ice - 100 years of magic

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Mixed fortunes for county's retailers

As part of our campaign to Shop Local! this Christmas, we ask how our independent traders have fared so far this year

By Jamie Weir

jamie.weir@archant.co.uk

WITH Christmas almost upon us, independent retailers say they are hopeful that the economy is beginning to turn a corner, but that more needs to be done if the county's high streets are to be saved.

The festive spending season is normally the big money spinner for most retailers – whether independent or not – and this year is no different.

With £91 billion forecast to pour into the economy as a result of present buying according to retail analysts, Verdict – the stakes are high for our independent retailers.

However, it isn't just Christmas that counts, with the whole year crucial for the smaller retailers, who, unable to compete with the volume of large chains, need to ensure that they are performing whether it's winter, summer or spring.

Hanne Hother founded her boutique Scandinavian design shop Hos

Hother in Sevenoaks in October, 2012. She told KoS the past year has been mixed for her.

She said: "It has been very up and down, with some good periods and others which weren't so good. It has taken a while for Christmas spending to kick in for us, and it certainly seemed to come later this year than last."

"However, people are spending and we are seeing solid footfall."

But, she says, the shop has faced problems with parking proving a particular issue.

"Parking is free in the area, which is great," explains Ms Hother. "The problem is that instead of shoppers using it, we find that there are a lot of commuters who end up taking it instead. That's no good, as it means that people can't come here and access shops easily, dragging our offering down considerably."

She says that her council has started a consultation into the issue, and are seeking to address the problem, but that it hasn't helped in the run up to Christmas.

And traffic is, predictably, one of the county's retailers biggest

bug-bears elsewhere in the county.

Canterbury shop owner Debbie Barwick told KoS that shopping in the city is a nightmare for her customers.

She said: "It's absolutely awful here at the moment, and all the High Street's problems are down to traffic. There's no bus service running past our area of the city now, which means that any customers who do come to Canterbury are funnelled elsewhere."

"That situation has been made worse by totally insufficient parking, alongside rumours that existing parking is set to be sold off."

Mrs Barwick, who has run her shop, Revivals, for the past 25 years, recently founded the retail lobbying organisation, the Canterbury Independent Traders' Association in the city.

Her group already has 106 small, independent traders signed up to its books, and she says that the troublesome problem of parking has hit all of them.

The nub of it, she says, is that the lack of parking makes supporting local shops an inconvenience that



many shoppers simply aren't willing to stomach.

Mrs Barwick explains: "The problem is that it has become easier to shop online, or go to an out of town shopping centre where they welcome customers with good, cheap, or free parking."

"I had a customer who gave up in the end, after she had been stuck in traffic for 45 minutes trying to get to my shop."

So what of the future and 2015 for Mrs Barwick? She says that the traders she represents are feeling the

pinch more now than even at the height of the credit crunch.

She said: "Traders in Canterbury are struggling right now. The real frustration for me is that no-one will care until it's too late. It's only then that parking will become available, once the city has already died."

Although Mrs Barwick, and other traders in Canterbury are suffering, some in the county are feeling more hopeful for the future.

Steve Jones runs local food outlet the Whitstable Produce Store, which has recently been voted runner-up in

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the Kent Independent Retailer of the Year awards. He told KoS that people are beginning to spend more, but they're still hunting out bargains where they can.

He said: "People are beginning to spend again after the last five years or so of austerity. But, what we find they are willing to spend on, is good, high quality products at prices which still show good value.

"It is certainly busy for us at the moment, and we've seen a real increase in footfall over the last year."

He puts the store's success down to

a simple blend of high quality goods not offered by bigger retailers, and real local sourcing.

He said: "We offer something that the internet and big chains don't. A real connection to the local area. I personally know all my suppliers, and have worked with them to make sure my customers get the best possible products.

"It's about offering something different for my customers. Something they cannot get anywhere else; that's what helps independent traders succeed."



PARKING: Has proved a problem for retailers across the county

ONE OF THE BEST HIGH STREETS IN THE COUNTRY

ONE of Kent's high streets has been honoured for being 'best in class'.

An initiative to promote the UK's best town centres has commended Folkestone High Street.

The Great British High Street campaign aims to promote shopping locally across the UK.

One of its initiatives this year, has been the creation of a high street advent calendar. Each day in December, a new high street is unveiled by the organisation as an

example of the best local shopping areas in the country.

Folkestone High Street was the advent high street on Thursday (December 11).

The Great British High Street group says the town deserved to feature on the calendar because of the high standards of collaboration between the town centre management team, businesses, landlords and the council.

The organisation praised the town, saying: "In addition to

building support for improving the appearance of their town centre, they have also encouraged volunteer involvement and provided paid work experience for local unemployed people, providing them with support and a route to help them back to work."

Both the High Street and Folkestone in general have undergone a great deal of regeneration over the last few years, with the Creative Quarter being extensively redeveloped.

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Golly dolls spark 'racism' allegations

Labour complain to Medway Council after controversial toy is spotted on sale at popular Rochester Christmas festival

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

A POLITICAL row has broken out after controversial cuddly 'golly' toys were on sale at a council-run Christmas festival in Medway.

The leader of the unitary authority's opposition Labour group said he is concerned they should be available, given their racist connotations in today's society (see box).

What was once an acceptable child's toy is now often seen as an insult to black people. It was spotted on sale in Rochester's Castle Gardens during the popular Dickensian Christmas Festival.

Labour leader Vince Maple, who also organises the annual Love Music Hate Racism music festival, was informed of the stand selling the controversial dolls after a picture appeared, without comment, on Twitter.

It was later re-Tweeted by Ukip's newest MP, Mark Reckless, also without comment. It was one of four in a collage of shots from the fair. Mr Reckless says he couldn't see the fuss and denied they were controversial.

But the picture, taken by a lady called Sue, from Strood, has created a storm because it was a council organised event.

Mr Maple told us he has now written to Richard Hicks, the deputy director of the council to complain.

He wrote: "It has come to my attention that inappropriate toys have been sold on a stall during this weekend's Dickens Festival.

"Named toys include 'Rasta Golly' 'Mini Rasta Golly' and 'Hand Knitted Golly'. I have seen images of this on Twitter. I am sure this is not something the council would approve of; the history of these toys is well documented.

"Could I ask to ensure that no such items are sold at council run events in the future."

Cllr Maple told KoS: "I didn't particularly see the stall, I wish to make it clear, but I had a couple of people point out to me the photos that were on Mark Reckless' Twitter feed.

"Clearly, to see that at a council run event, which Dickens Christmas is, I thought was inappropriate.

"Clearly those dolls have got a very long history and even in recent history, they have been at the centre of racist controversy.

"I don't think they are appropriate at a council run event.

"That is why I wrote the letter."

After members of the public pointed out on web forums that the dolls were merely innocent toys and only controversial because of media stories and the claims of politicians, Cllr Maple told us that when some extra right wing political organisations are selling them "says to me in the 21st century that some people still make the racist link. They mimic people

and are an early form of racism".

The dolls, selling for £45 on the stall, were on sale during the festival which took place last weekend.

"I am disappointed they were on sale, especially given the sort of people we had in the town during the recent by-election," said Cllr Maple.

"I would think the person selling them should think hard about what these dolls mean to some people."

It is not known who the trader was, and Cllr Maple said: "It is not for me to talk about individuals.

"But them being sold at a council run event is the issue I have. I would not stop individuals selling them – they are not illegal.

"I would hope the council would look closely at this in the future. With my own festival, I am trying to promote unity in the community, and items like this being sold at a council run event does the complete opposite.

"I have had some complaints with people saying they are wrong, but also other people saying it's not. So there are strong views on both sides."

Medway Council said the matter has become "political" and did not wish to comment.

Rochester and Strood MP Mark Reckless, who shocked the Conservatives when he defected to Ukip and won his seat again during a high profile by-election at the end of last month, told us he saw nothing wrong with the dolls.

In fact he didn't even spot them



ON SALE: Golly dolls have sparked political row

when he originally re-tweeted the story on Twitter.

Asked if he had any thoughts about it being on sale, he told us: "Not really.

"I hadn't actually noticed it when I re-tweeted it. I thought it was a good collage of what was going on at the Dickens Christmas festival.

"But I don't think it's a controversy I need to wade in to."

Told some people think these dolls

have racist undertones, he said: "I don't think you can assume that, actually."

What do you think? Do the dolls still carry racist overtones? Or is this political correctness gone mad?

Share your views and join the debate. Write to: The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford TN23 1PP or email us at editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.

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HEAVY HISTORY OF THE GOLLY

A MAJOR clue to their controversy is that these days, no one uses their former full name.

The final syllable took on a life of its own in the 1960s and 70s when it was commonly used on television and quickly became a word used in a negative context to describe black people.

As attitudes towards race thankfully improved, the word became grossly offensive and one which today is rarely uttered.

It wasn't always like that. The dolls, generally male, were once seen as an ideal cuddly toy for children and an alternative to a Teddy bear.

It made its first appearance in children's books in the late 19th century and was a favourite with toy makers and even a brand of jam.

The popular Noddy series of books had a character based on one and it became mainstream.

However, it soon became clear it was an exaggerated characterisation of a race and a growing unease as to its appearance saw changes in attitude.

The toys faded, the jam maker dropped it, and the name of the doll shrank to golly.

There are still those who see no harm in them, so long as they are not portrayed negatively.

But they continue to make many feel un-



PAST: Harmless or simply racist?

easy - not for what they represent today, but the heavy baggage they continue to carry from the past.

For many the golly has long since had its day and should be consigned to history.



ONE OFF PERFORMANCE:
Regular panellists including Alan Davies will be in the line-up

QI quiz show will come to Kent University in new year

A special edition of the popular show will be performed live in Canterbury

A special one-off version of hit BBC TV quiz show QI is to be held at the University of Kent in the new year, as part of the institution's 50th birthday celebrations.

The line up will include regular panellists Alan Davies, Sandi Toksvig, Jo Brand and Phil Jupitus. Stephen Fry will not be present, but his place on the panel will be taken by the show's creator and producer, John Lloyd.

Completing the line-up will be the University of Kent's senior lecturer in drama and theatre Dr Oliver Double.

The performance will be taking place at the university's Canterbury campus on February 9 2015.

All profits from the ticket sales of 'QI Live at Kent' will go towards the Kent Opportunity Fund, which

supports scholarships and projects for student's extracurricular activities and bursaries for students in financial hardship.

Producer John Lloyd said: "I genuinely can't wait to put this on."

"We've got an unbeatable line-up of panellists, a fabulous venue, the whole QI research team behind us and it's all for an excellent cause."

"What's not to get excited about? It's going to be an absolute hoot."

QI is a comedy game show whose guiding principle is that everything can be interesting if you look at it in the right way.

A series of extremely hard questions are posed to the panellists, and while they rarely know the right answer they are awarded points for providing interesting or amusing ones.

Launched in 2003 and currently

airing on BBC2 on Fridays at 10pm, the show is watched all over the world and has spawned publications including the 'General Ignorance' series, a 'Museum of Curiosity' radio show on BBC Radio 4 and weekly podcasts by 'QI Elves'.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Keith Mander said: "We're delighted to host a special performance of such a popular show- especially as all the panellists have a strong connection with the university."

"It promises to be an entertaining, informative evening for everyone involved, with the money we raise going towards the Kent Opportunity Fund."

Alan Davies is a former student, Jo Brand has an honorary doctorate, Sandi Toksvig has an honorary degree and lives in nearby Herne Bay, while Phill Jupitus' two

children are both at the university.

'QI Live at Kent' will take place from 7pm to 8.30pm in the Colyer-Fergusson Hall.

Seats in the hall have now sold out but special live screenings, hosted by students and alumni from the university, will also be shown at venues across the Canterbury campus.

The exciting event can still be viewed at a live screening show in the Gulbenkian Cinema, and tickets are priced at £10 each.

In addition to this, tickets to an exclusive after-show buffet dinner at nearby Darwin Hall are also available following the event.

The tickets are £20 per person, along with cinema live stream tickets.

Tickets can be booked at the Gulbenkian Box Office, or online at www.thegulbenkian.co.uk.

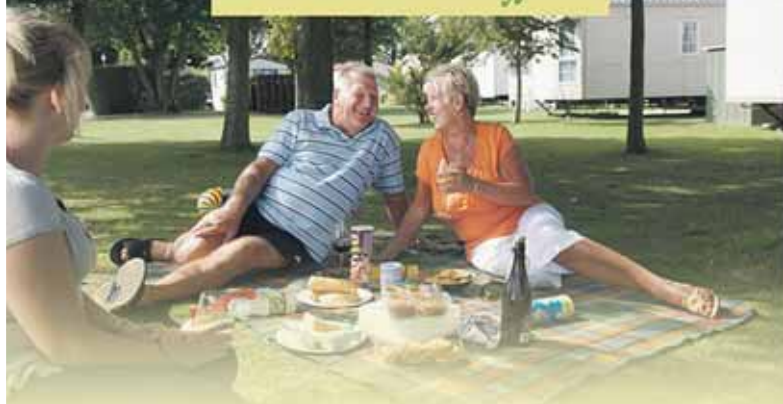
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Take home a slice of a classic cathedral sound

By Molly Kersey

molly.kersey@archant.co.uk

THE world famous choir of Canterbury Cathedral has recorded a new CD.

The new recording, which is called Evensong, features the full vocal range of the choir and was made as a result of a huge number of requests.

They were directed by Dr David Flood, Master of Choristers and Organist at Canterbury Cathedral.

The organ was played by David Newsholme, assistant organist at the cathedral.

"The Cathedral Choir's new CD is a response to the hundreds of requests for a recording of Evensong," Dr Flood explained.

"This recording captures the choir in fine form and includes some outstanding music from its wide repertoire, linked with readings chosen by the Dean of Canterbury, the Very Rev Dr Robert Willis."

Evensong is the form of evening prayer used by the Church of England, which was written by Archbishop Thomas Crammer.

It has been used since the 16th



century and incorporates elements of two Benedictine services, Vespers and Compline, that were sung daily by the monks in Canterbury Cathedral prior to the Reformation.

Crammer combined some of the words used in both services to create today's form of Evensong.

It is sung or said every day at the cathedral, and the recording provides a sample of the tradition.

It contains a variety of music from many eras.

Dr Flood added: "It includes a

wonderful recording of Rejoice in the Lamb by Benjamin Britten, the Magnificat by Giles Swayne, the Nunc dimittis by Gustav Holst, and the anthem written for the Jubilee of the Queen in 2012 by Will Todd, Call of Wisdom.

"With some fine organ volunteers from David Newsholme, this is a disc not to be missed."

Evensong is £12.50 and it is available from the cathedral's shop. For more information or to purchase it, visit

www.cathedral-enterprises.co.uk



CATHEDRAL: CD will be music to many people's ears



SOOTHING: Evensong is available to buy now

Geek confirms 2015 dates

VIDEO game festival Geek has confirmed it will return to Margate for a three-day event from February 20 to 22.

The event, focusing on the evolution of gaming, will be at Margate Winter Gardens.



Private Widdle returns

PAUL Foot will be taking a mini-break from his UK tour to host The Private Widdle Social Club's Christmas Cracker Show at The Arcade, Dreamland, on December 19 at 7pm.

Booking is essential and tickets can be purchased at www.dreamlandchristmas-cracker.eventbrite.co.uk

Vote for X Factor hopeful

WEST Wickham's Ben Haenow is going for glory this weekend after securing a place in the X Factor grand final.

The 29-year-old will vie with Fleur East and Andrea Faustini to be crowned the winner.



Horsebridge's film boost

It's lights, camera, action at the Horsebridge Centre, Whitstable, where the British Film Institute is set to deliver some £5,000 worth of new equipment.

A projector, screen, amplifier and speakers will be installed for free as part of the BFI's national neighbourhood cinema scheme.

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Tale of hubris and deceit

MARK Thomas will bring a tale of hubris, demos and deceit to the Folkestone Quarterhouse on April 24 at 8pm.

The show follows on from award-winning Brave Figaro. To book call 01303 760 750



TV star due in Maidstone

THE star of BBC2's comedy show *Mock The Week*, Andy Parsons, will be bringing his new show *Live and Unleashed- But Naturally Cautious* to the Hazlitt Theatre, Maidstone, on February 26 at 8pm.

For more details or to book please, visit www.parkwoodtheatres.co.uk

Pixie visits Bluewater

FRESH from her appearance on *Strictly Come Dancing*, pop princess Pixie Lott appeared at Bluewater on Thursday to greet her Kent fans.

The star lost out to Simon Webbe in the dance off.



Best-seller brought to life

THE stage adaptation of of Dead Simple, Peter James' all time best-selling novel, will premiere at Dartford's Orchard Theatre from January 14 to 17.

A host of famous faces including Tina Hobley and Jamie Lomas will bring the work to life.

For more information or to book please, visit www.orchardtheatre.co.uk

Show brings magic of Motown to Churchill

By Molly Kersey

molly.kersey@archant.co.uk

CELEBRATING 50 years of number one hit singles, the Magic of Motown is bringing a brand new Reach Out 2014 tour to town.

Well-loved songs including *Dancing in the Street*, *My Girl*, *Where Did Our Love Go* and *My Guy* rocketed Motown to the top of the singles charts in 1964.

The Magic of Motown gives audience members the chance to relive the classic hits.

They will be performing at The Churchill Theatre, Bromley, on January 30 at 8pm.

Direct from the USA, the Magic of Motown will authentically revive the style and sophistication of everyone's favourite Motown legends.

Show producer Michael Taylor told us: "Sadly, many of the original Motown legends are either no longer with us or no longer touring."

"The Magic of Motown is the nearest you'll get to authentically capturing their incredible musical



legacy in a live show.

"Our young cast is able to reflect the exuberance and excitement of these songs as they were originally performed."

"The Magic of Motown 2014 Reach Out tour brings to the stage 36 of these chart-toppers back to back in one critically acclaimed production."

"This year we're proud to announce that the show will include more number one hits than ever before."

"As well as dazzling dance moves, and glittering costumes

galore, the elusive, authentic sound of Motown is recreated by our incredible Magic of Motown band."

Care is taken to reproduce the look of the Motown stars on stage.

Employing the services of top costume designer Claire Davis, they have created a selection of colourful costumes for the cast.

Leading man Andre Lejaune choreographs the cast to perform the intricate dance moves which made the Motown stars famous.

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Respond to the Christmas carol message

By Rev Anthony Everett

Christ Church, Herne Bay

MANY songs both modern and more traditional have a special place in people's hearts and minds.

This may be due to particular memories or relationships.

Many people would have a favourite Christmas carol, perhaps one that they sang as a child, or one that has particular family memories.

In this year, the hundredth anniversary of the start of the First World War has meant that Silent Night has reverberated around our major football stadiums.

Teams have stood together to celebrate the Christmas truce that occurred 100 years ago with the rumoured singing of Silent Night across the trenches and the outbreak of spontaneous football matches certainly behind the trenches and probably in the neutral zone.

For Christians, Christmas carols of course have a much deeper significance as they reflect the belief that Christmas is all about the arrival of the Son of God into the world.

Jesus' coming has inspired some memorable songs and tunes.

The writers of carols wanted people to know what was really happening that first Christmas so although we may think that all the carols are basically the same actually they are not.



THINK: If you attend a nativity this Christmas spare a thought for the message in the carols you will sing

So whether you hear a carol in a supermarket, join a nativity celebration at school or church, listen to carols on TV or go to a carol service, here are some things to think about.

How well do we keep our promises to one another?

At Christmas we may promise a

present to someone that we then find it impossible to get.

Some carols remind us that God keeps his promises. He promised hundreds of years before that one would come to deal with all the things we do wrong.

Silent Night, It Came Upon a

Midnight Clear and even Little Donkey remind us of such a thing.

The recent Netmums survey about how few schools now have a traditional nativity has caused great debate as to whether this is right or wrong.

I will experience both this Christmas but even in the least

traditional of events every time we hear or sing While Shepherds Watched, We three Kings, The First Nowell, and The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy we are reminded of the events of that first Christmas.

Like all good songs these carols are meant to engage our emotions and so we are encouraged to respond in wonder and joy.

The fact that God enters our world in Jesus to show us what God is like and that He wants us to know Him as father and friend has to invoke an emotional response.

The last verse of In The Bleak Midwinter illustrates this

What can I give him, poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;

If I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;

Yet what I can I give him: Give my heart.

As you hear or sing a carol this Christmas will you pause a moment and think 'What is Christmas really all about? How can I respond?'



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Communion Service at 8.00am
Family Celebration Service at 10.30am followed by short communion service

Christmas Services at St Andrew's Hampton Pier Avenue, Herne Bay
Sunday December 14th Carols by Candlelight at 6.00pm
Followed by mulled wine/non-alcoholic mulled drink
Sunday December 21st Nativity Service at 10.00am
Thursday December 25th - Christmas Day
Family Celebration Service at 9.30am

More details - parish@hernebay.org.uk or 01227 366640

Rotary Club of Broadstairs

Thursday 18th December
Carol Concert at Queens Road Baptist Church, Broadstairs
Rev Jan Dash conducts the Rotary Clubs of Thanet Christmas Carol Service.
Supported by the Joint Clubs Choir.
Reading by representatives of each Rotary Club

Candlelight Concert "Veni Emmanuel"
Music and readings for Advent with the Victoria Consort.

Tickets £10 at door, to include mulled wine and mince pies



St Augustine's Church
St Augustine's Road Ramsgate CT11 9PA

Faversham Choral Society's Christmas Concert

Director of music **Andrew Storey** presents a programme including **Benjamin Britten's Ceremony of Carols** with **Anna Wynne** as harpist. Anna will also provide a solo harp interlude.

The society will be performing carols old and new, with a chance to sing a few of your favourites.

Max Bartley is the organist.

Tickets are £10 on the door (under-16s free or from Carter's Newsagents, Market Place, Faversham, and include a glass of mulled wine and a mince pie).

There will be a raffle in support of Dyspraxia Action

Where: Parish Church of St Mary of Charity, Faversham
When: 7.30pm **Contact:** info@favchoral.org

Saturday 13th December 2014
Concert of Carols
Whitstable Choral Society
St Alphege Church, High Street, Whitstable, Kent CT5 1AY at 7.30pm

Conductor - David Flood
Organist - David Newsholme

Extensive parking in Middle Wall car park, within 5 minutes' walk of St Alphege Church.

The audience will be invited to sing a number of the most well-known and traditional carols with the choir.

Carol books will be made available to the audience before the concert.

Children in the audience will be invited to perform "Away in a Manger" under David Flood's personal direction.

Afterwards, every child will receive a small reward for their glorious contribution to the evening.

This concert is a wonderful mixture of choral and well known seasonal music appealing to the whole family - a tradition in the Whitstable calendar.

Ticket Prices: £7.50 Adults - £5.00 Children Under 12 - No concessions
Tickets available at the door

KEA

Week ending December 14, 2014 45

Overwhelming diversity in Bolivia

TRAVEL REVIEW: Bolivia

by Sarah Marshall

HINDERED by ongoing industrial disputes and a controversial socialist administration, Bolivia has always been the poor child of South America, rich in natural resources but failing to attract the tourist numbers of neighbouring Peru.

Yet its overwhelmingly diverse scenery and largely unexplored archaeological sites evoke a sense of real discovery for anyone who visits.

I'd arrived in Bolivia several days earlier, crossing the border from Chile at Hijo Canjon, with a local knowledgeable driver. Turning onto a bumpy dirt track, I waved goodbye to paved tarmac and road signs for the next seven days, embarking on a journey that would take me through the Andes and Bolivia's Altiplano, climbing to head-thumping heights of 5,000m.

Undoubtedly Bolivia's greatest tourist attraction is the Salar de Uyuni, the world's largest salt flat, pulled taut like a blinding white blank canvas across a 12,000sq km frame.

Formed from prehistoric lakes, the honeycomb patchwork of crystallized crust is also a cause of concern for environmentalists, as a rich source of lithium lies beneath its surface, a prospect too tempting for the government to ignore.

Having stayed the night at Palacio del Sal, a hotel carved entirely from salt, we drive to Incahuasi, one of many island oases dotted across the flats, and climb a path weaving through tall, bulbous cacti.

Our journey continues for several hours before salt gives way to soil at the foot of Mount Tanupa, where llamas graze in the shadow of Santos Quispe Cayo's sculpture garden.



UNSPOILT AND STUNNING: Bolivia has much to offer visitors keen on big views and in big setting

Many of the country's hotels are community run - to varying degrees of success.

One flourishing business is the Tomarapi Ecolodge in the Sajama National Park, where guests stay in simple lodges and homemade food is cooked in an outdoor clay oven.

The park's main attraction is the 6,542m Sajama volcano, the second highest peak in South America, but we choose to tackle less arduous

walking trails during our stay.

Passing a bofedal, where camelids gather to graze and drink water, we trek through bristly teardrops of bunched hard grass and yareta plants that bear a disturbing resemblance to neon cowpats, until we reach a patch of khenua bushes, constituting the highest forest in the world.

Five communities still live inside the national park, and we encounter families using volcanic stones to

build barbecues, and cholitas (indigenous women in traditional dress) boiling eggs in the hot springs of geyser fields.

But even in big cities such as La Paz, it's possible to find cholitas wearing bowler hats and a millefeuille of petticoats, as we discover when we visit.

As we ride in a new government-funded cable car above the city, I look down and see a guitar-strumming

SARAH Marshall was a guest of HighLives Travel.

They offer the 13-day Bolivian Odyssey from £2,100 per person - excluding flights.

For more information please visit www.highlives.co.uk or alternatively you can call 020 8144 2629.

Extension to Sajama National Park costs from £600 per person.

The tour includes accommodation, transfers, guided tours and some meals.

minstrel singing to tombs in the city's main cemetery, an extremely moving practice that's been undertaken for years. Although of great benefit to the local community, I wonder if the money spent on the Teleferico project could have been better invested elsewhere - namely in excavating some of the country's largely unexplored archaeological sites.

The most famous to date is Tiwanaku, just outside La Paz, a pre-Colombian city thought to be twice the size of Machu Picchu and thousands of years older.

Despite being exposed to the sun and wind, the sunken floor of a grand temple is remarkably well preserved, featuring a series of unnerving sandstone faces, which some scholars theorize were created to reflect the different cultures passing through the community at that time.

During my visit, I count just four people excavating the still largely uncovered site, and I wonder, at this rate, how many years it will take for Bolivia to discover its truly inexhaustible resource.

For now though, until the correct funding is in place, perhaps it's safer it remains underground.

Film Reviews by Damon Smith



The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies (12A, 144 mins) Action/Comedy/Adventure/Romance

IT has been a long and sometimes gruelling slog since The Lord Of The Rings: The Return Of The King.

Giddy expectation has crashed and burned, with only a few

smouldering embers for ardent fans to stoke in the hope that Jackson might redeem himself with this concluding chapter of The Hobbit trilogy.

Alas, The Battle Of Five Armies bids farewell to the hobbits, dwarfs and elves with a whimper rather than a bang.

The script occasionally deviates from Tolkien's source text, contriving one superfluous and protracted interlude with elvish allies Elrond and Galadriel and wizard Saruman to provide a flimsy bridge between the two series.

Jackson's mastery of action sequences is beyond doubt - the two set pieces, which bookend this film, are executed with flair, precision and a masima of impressive digital effects.

However, all that technical sound and fury without comparable emotional heft makes for increasingly wearisome viewing.

As the fate of Middle Earth hangs in the balance, Thorin sacrifices everything in his selfish pursuit of the mythical Arkenstone.

The film follows a similar template to earlier pictures, resolving plot strands including the forbidden romance of Tauriel and Kili as the blood flows in brutal fight sequences.

Comical interludes with Alfrid seem to jar with the darker tone that pervades this chapter, including the inevitable loss of at least one hero in the melee.

Freeman's performance provides a flimsy emotional fulcrum while co-stars battle with their characters' demons or hordes of bloodthirsty orcs.

As the end credits roll, accompanied by an original song from Billy Boyd who played Pippin in The Lord Of The Rings saga, we feel a sense of relief rather than sadness.

Rating: 6/10.



Tinker Bell and the Legend of the Neverbeast (U, 76 mins) Animation/Fantasy/Drama/Comedy.)

TINKER Bell And The Legend Of The Neverbeast is the sixth and most enjoyable instalment in the series so far, referencing Beauty And The Beast and the fable of

Androcles and the lion to teach children - particularly girls - that true beauty comes from within.

Director Steve Loter and his team of animators dilute that message by festooning the screen with pretty, slim, rosy-cheeked and beautifully coiffured protagonists dressed in figure hugging fairy fashions. But it's the thought that counts.

Rating: 6/10

YOU may be tempted by expensive, fancy table decorations and wreaths in shops, but, if you look in your garden, you'll find some brilliant adornments for free.

All you need for an effective table decoration, for instance, is a few uniform-sized small glass holders into which a single cone can be placed, topped with a flower such as an orchid, as demonstrated by Judith Blacklock, principal of The Judith Blacklock Flower School.

Garden foliage can form the base of a cornucopia of decorations. Take clippings from evergreens including conifers, box, holly and ivy, to make a base for wreaths and swags to which you can add berries, fruits, baubles and bows.

Common plants which are ideal include *Skimmia japonica*, which has glossy red berries and leaves which are much easier to handle than holly because they don't have the accompanying spikes, Judith says.

"Variegated holly is another great choice because of the wonderful variegated foliage, while berried ivy, *Hedera Helix Arborescens* produces black fruits which are at their best at Christmas," she said.

"Fruiting ivy can be found in virtually every garden hedgerow and placed in a vase with flowers like anemones threaded through.

"Spray the leaves with gold for a really festive effect."

Add *skimmia* and bay from your garden to traditional wreaths. If you



FREE INDOOR DECORATIONS AND ADORNMENTS: Bringing a little piece of your garden inside can really help to get you into the Christmas spirit

Look to garden for decoration

want to add bits of dried fruit, cinnamon sticks, berries or baubles, make sure you have plenty of them.

Judith says: "Go natural – collect, use and spray leaves, berries, seed heads and cones. The best way to spray is by placing your finds in a small box. Spray once, close and rattle the box, then open and spray again.

Achieve more scent with a room spray or an unobtrusive scented stick such as the newly launched Scentsicles, biodegradable dark green or brown sticks, which you can add to a wreath or decoration (£6 per pack of six in four fragrances, from John Lewis and leading garden centres).

Judith has even developed a design featuring a Brussels sprout base

topped with *skimmia* berries and anemones.

Cut a piece of foam (keep it dry) into a vertical column that is sufficiently wide and tall to hold a container. Press the container firmly into the foam to mould the shape and depth of it and then remove the container and with a knife cut out the piece of foam so your container fits.

The rim of the container should rise just above the foam.

Cut some cocktail sticks in two and trim the spouts so they have a smooth base and insert a stick into the base of each sprout, positioned in the foam.

Repeat until the foam is covered. Pour water into the inner container and evenly arrange your foliage, berries and flowers.

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Gloag's charity influences?

A COUPLE of months before Ann Gloag closed Manston Airport, she was approached to join Bill Gates' Giving pledge campaign by the Microsoft boss's wife Melinda.

Ann Gloag has signed up to the scheme and pledged to give away half of her estimated £500 million fortune before she dies. I believe the timing of this is very significant.

Could it be that with advancing age, she realised that to realise her new charitable commitment she made a mistake with Manston and doesn't have the time to waste on it with her greater ambitions?

She approached leaders in Kent for suggestions. KCC steps in and persuades her this is a great opportunity to start afresh with Manston and there are appropriate developers waiting.

Perhaps she was persuaded that this was in Kent's best interest and she went along with it because she wanted out as soon as possible.

The sad thing is Manston was about to be successful, it just became owned by the wrong person at the wrong time in her life as her circumstances suddenly changed.

I propose that senior leaders in the Government talk to Ann Gloag and make her realise she has been given very bad advice. Impress upon her that Manston will either be an airport or a toxic wasteland, that for any developer it would be like building on the side of a mountain such is the outcry of public opinion.

I propose that government officials ask Ann Gloag to bury her differences with Riveroak and they work together for a new beginning as a global hub for distribution by air of international aid. This would have great synergy with her ambitions for charitable work in Africa.

Kent is well placed to provide all kinds of services like biomedicine, solar heaters, solar panels, water purification plants, temporary shelter, medical equipment and supplies, education supplies – the potential list is endless. Pharmaceutical plants need to be near an airport. Develop the Discovery Park for these.

It could be the envy of the world and really put Thanet on the map. Add to this cargo and airplane dismantling, it's something to get excited about.

Mike Thompson
 Waltham

Stay alert over flood defences

IT IS extremely good news that the Government has pledged another £10 million for sea defences on Romney Marsh.

I would add a word of appreciation to both our local MPs, Damian Collins and Amber

LETTER OF THE WEEK



Real price of homes on greenfield sites

DESPITE the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)'s excellent campaign to build new housing on previously developed brownfield land (KoS 30.11), many local authorities in Kent and elsewhere continue to grant permission for housing on undeveloped greenfield sites.

Why? Because they do not have up-to-date local plans and housing needs assessments as required since 2012.

This means that, although there may be sufficient brownfield land available, developers wishing to build houses on greenfield sites have a good chance of successfully appealing rejected planning applications.

In Thanet, the council recently withdrew its objections to a 550 house development on agricultural land near Westwood Cross because it doesn't have an up-to-date development plan or housing assessment.

It's virtually certain that an application for 880 houses on farmland outside Ramsgate and plans to build houses on the 700 acres of open spaces at the former Manston Airport site will be approved for the same reason.

I was shocked to learn last week that Thanet's revised development

plan and housing assessment will not be ready until 2017 – that's an incredible five years in the making.

This means that despite abundant brownfield land, the next two years will be 'open season' for developers wishing to build on our greenfield sites and there is little we can do to stop them.

Sadly I suspect that delays in preparing Thanet's development plan and housing assessment may be deliberate. Because for every house built in their area, councils receive an additional Government payment equivalent to the council tax paid on that property for a period of six years. This could mean a windfall of several million for cash-strapped councils like Thanet.

So despite the 2011 manifesto promise by Thanet's ruling Labour Party to protect greenfield and open spaces from development; Thanet and many other councils are forced to drag their feet in producing new local plans so as to milk a perversely incentivised cash cow and destroy much of our rural environment in the process.

Cllr Ian Driver
 Green Party,
 Thanet District Council

Rudd, MP for Hastings & Rye.

Very soon after they were elected they took time to appraise themselves of the serious threat of flooding to Romney Marsh, and have done everything they can to encourage the Government to make funds available.

The Environment Agency already has in place a number of schemes, which if implemented together would certainly give reasonable protection for the Marsh.

I was encouraged by a visit to the Broomhill Scheme which will give added protection to the homes and properties at Jury's Gap and Camber.

I was disappointed that so few people bothered to attend the public consultation events put on recently by the Environment Agency to give local people the opportunity to make their comments on the various schemes to protect the Marsh.

This is no time for complacency. With rising sea levels and climate change, parts of the Marsh are extremely vulnerable, and if one part of the Marsh is breached then, as some of us have said so many times before, the whole Marsh is at risk.

The Dymchurch scheme and

now the Broomhill scheme are excellent.

Now that the promised funding is in place to carry out the remaining schemes, pressure must continue until they are completed.

Terry Preston,
 Former Chairman of Defend our Coast Association (DOC)

We are ready for winter weather

I WAS disappointed to read your reader H Bell's letter (KoS, 30.11) suggesting that the "few flakes" of snow that settle in Kent bring the county to a standstill every winter.

This is nonsense and wholly unfair. I wonder if H Bell actually lives in Kent.

Kent County Council, as the highway authority for Kent, has a comprehensive plan for winter.

We subscribe to detailed weather forecasting services to enable us to anticipate ice and snow, and thermal mapping and local knowledge means that we always know when to carry out precautionary gritting on the primary and secondary routes so that people can get to work and to school, and the business of Kent can continue.

We have over 23,000 tonnes of grit and more than 60 gritters to work round the clock when needed.

With farmers to help us in the rural areas and our district council colleagues to keep the town centres clear, and with grit bins where they're needed, we can keep Kent moving.

David Brazier,
 KCC cabinet member,
 environment & transport

Pity the foreign driver at tunnel

WITH reference to the Dartford Crossing article (KoS, last week) in which Luke Bosnet of the AA highlighted some of the issues raised with the new tolling system, it missed out what will be the real money earner for the Highways Agency.

That is fines, especially from foreign registered vehicles.

While some of the major foreign haulage companies will be up to date, how about the occasional users, like tourists?

How will they know for example that they can use the whole of the motorway system for free which includes the Medway/M2 bridge, yet a few miles further on, have to pay to use this tiny section of the M25?

Even if they could read some signs, saying they had to pay; would they know how? Drive through a toll booth it is clear cut.

Easy to knock jolly foreigners, but so are we when we go abroad; would you like to be treated like this?

Terry Hudson
 Whitstable



Knole Park by Amanda Lord, Edenbridge

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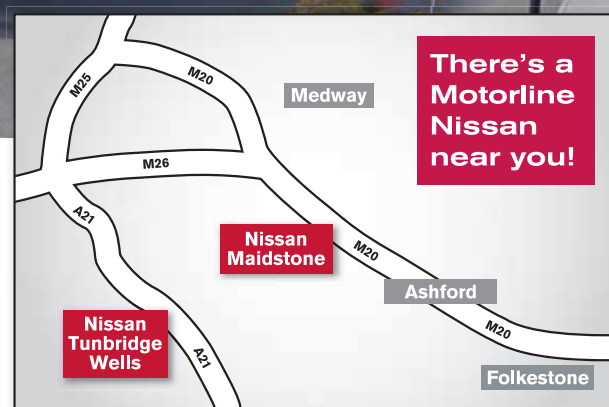


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By Steve Loader
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

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PROGRESS: Smart new Corsa could be set to be Vauxhall's trump card as it could outstrip sales of previous incarnation.



Corsa's evolution worthy of serious consideration

THERE is usually a groan when a new car model is presented to journalists as showing "evolution rather than revolution".

It's because we cynical scribes hear different phrases like "the accountants wouldn't let us build an all-new car" or "we didn't want to be brave" and so on.

In the case of the new Vauxhall Corsa though, I junked my prejudices and recognised "evolution" was the right word; the new Corsa, does indeed echo its predecessor in styling, with family overtones added from the elegant Astra and Insignia.

But it is a classier execution than before in looks and build quality and, even if the stylists have been less bold, the car's underpinnings and quality are more revolutionary, and there's more interior space front and back.

The new Corsa line-up also boasts an all-new three-cylinder 1.0-litre turbocharged petrol engine; 'three-pot' units are a Holy Grail for manufacturers, being cheap to build, compact and delivering many operating efficiencies, but they can be noisy so-and-sos due to the inherent imbalance through having an odd number of cylinders – I previously describes one such engine as sounding like angry pheasants caged under the bonnet.



No such 'fowl-up' with the Corsa though; the engineers have done a wonderful job of smoothing the eccentricities of three pistons driving the crankshaft, to create an engine that is smooth, lively and economical.

Indeed, it rather upstages the tried and tested

1.2 and 1.4-litre petrol and 1.3-litre diesel units also offered in the newcomer.

All are well capable though of making use of a well-ordered suspension geared specifically to UK roads. New Corsa prices start at a competitive £8,995, with first deliveries in January.

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Volvo puts pressure on German rivals

Volvo has injected more ecopower into its slick best-selling V40 hatchback, attracting company ‘user choosers’ and private buyers alike...

VOLVO kicked off the premium hatchback game way back in 1972 with its 1800ES sports model. Its all-glass tailgate then became a signature feature for the Swedish premium marque, reprised on the 1980s 480 sporting estate, and recent C30 coupe hatch.

So, while German premium brands laud their new hatchback models, remember who started the trend, and now upholds it with the V40 five-door hatchback (from £18,995).

Admittedly, a glass tailgate has been omitted in favour of a more conventional one to go with it's ‘v’ for versatile model prefix, but everything else about the V40's low slung five-door coupe shape says sporty, enhanced by two flagship trims: R-Design (from £21,295) for a restrained performance look with re-styled bumpers and extra smart alloys, and Cross-Country (from £23,330) for the sporty off-roader image.

Both treatments enhance the V40's attractions for not much more money, though the Cross Country's ‘rough, tough’ styling add-ons must not be mistaken for genuine off-road ability; it still doesn't really have the ground clearance, though an



all-wheel drive version is available.

What will be more worrying to Volvo's German rivals though is the latest in an array of efficient Drive-E engines that have enabled Volvo to make great inroads into the company car market as well as recruit new buyers.

The new unit, tested here, is the powerful 190bhp D4 Drive-E diesel available on the V40 from £24,570 and offering a road tax exempt 99g/km CO2 emissions and official combined 74.3mpg consumption, while still good for a lively 0-62mph in just 7.4 seconds.



Fortunately, the V40 is blessed with a good ride plus sharp handling when required, so you can happily exploit the D4 unit's extra power, delivered with a smoothness and economy that would have seemed impossible just 10 years ago.

Inside the V40, everything looks

Rated:	
Volvo V40 D4 SE Lux Nav	
Price:	£27,770
Driving appeal:	★★★★★
Image:	★★★★★
Space:	★★★★
Value:	★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★★
How green?:	★★★★
Best rival:	Audi A3 Sportback

built to last in typical Volvo fashion, except that the brand adds flair to a cabin nowadays and this includes the now familiar ‘flying centre console’ with a cubby hole behind; in truth, this feature doesn't deliver much space or handiness but it's a unique selling point and rather elegant.

And while you might expect practicality to suffer from the V40's sweeping rear end, leg and headroom is sufficient and load space competitive with obvious rivals.

It goes without saying that this latest Volvo is also one of the safest cars available: the V40 posted the highest ever score in the Euro NCAP safety test, which translates into low insurance and high reassurance.

So, if you want to downsize and retain comfort, image and space - plus extra power from that versatile new D4 engine - check out the V40.



The leading car scheme for disabled people

Personal Contract Hire - Maintained*	Volvo V40 D2 Cross Country SE Manual
Contract length	36 months
Mileage per annum	20,000
Advance Payment	£299
Monthly rental	Government funded mobility allowance is exchanged

VAT payable at a rate of 20%, included in Advance Payment stated. Excess mileage charges may apply. Metallic paint included.

The offer is available on Contract Hire terms only. Personal use only. Finance subject to status. Terms and conditions apply.
* Advance Payment of £299 is for the Volvo V40 D2 Cross Country SE manual. Initial payment as displayed, followed by 35 monthly rentals. Vehicle returned at contract end must be within contracted mileage to avoid further charges. Excess mileage charges 5p + VAT per mile. Subject to availability at participating dealers. Not available with other promotions. Motability Contract Hire is provided by Motability Operations, City Gate House, 22 Southwark Bridge Road, London SE1 9HB.
Offer available to Motability customers only. Offers valid from 01/10/2014 to 31/12/2014. For full terms and conditions visit volvocars.co.uk/motability.



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(initially, subject to funding)

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For an application pack please contact
office@ddvc.org.uk or phone **01304 36789**.
Closing date for applications
23rd December 2014.
Interviews: **13th January 2015**

PLANNING



**THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING
(DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE)
(ENGLAND) ORDER 2010**

The following applications have been submitted for consideration by the Council:

Y14/1316/SH - 23 - 25 The Old High Street Folkestone Kent CT20 1RL - Listed building consent for the demolition and rebuilding of a chimney stack

Y14/1357/SH - Summer Court Whitegates Close Hythe Kent CT21 6AZ - Works to an Ash tree situated within a conservation area comprising the reduction of the crown by approximately 8 metres and removal of lower overhanging branches

Y14/1359/SH - Tree Cottage Church Road Lydd Romney Marsh Kent - Works to trees situated within a conservation area comprising the felling of a Conifer and the pollarding to previous pollarding points of three Sycamores

Y14/1365/SH - Grove House Canterbury Road Etchinghill Folkestone Kent - Felling of two Cherries and 2 Birch trees and various pruning works to an Indian Bean Tree, seven Birch, a Cherry and a Mountain Ash, all subject of Tree Preservation Order No. 1 of 2014

Y14/1338/SH - Land Adjacent Princess Royal 28 South Street Folkestone Kent - Pollarding of five Sycamore trees to a height of 5 metres, all situated within a conservation area

Representations can be made in writing either on line on the Council's website, by email to planning@shepway.gov.uk or in writing to the Head of Planning and Environmental Health, Shepway District Council, Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 2QY. Please always quote the application reference number. Comments should be made in writing within 21 days from the date of publication. Please note that any representations received will be publically viewable on the Council's website.

Some applications can be viewed at other locations in addition to the Civic Centre, Folkestone. The applications are marked as follows:

- The One Stop Shop, Magpies, Church Approach, New Romney

+ - Hythe Town Council Offices, Stade Street, Hythe

The applications marked (*) do not accord with the provisions of the development plan in force in the area in which the land to which the application relates is situated.

Note: This is not a full list of applications received. All planning applications can be viewed and comments made online at <http://searchplanapps.shepway.gov.uk/online-applications/>.

C Lewis, Head of Planning and Environmental Health
Shepway District Council

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HIGHWAYS



**M2 MOTORWAY JUNCTIONS 4 - 6
TEMPORARY TRAFFIC RESTRICTIONS**

Notice is hereby given that the Secretary of State for Transport intends to make an Order on the M2 Motorway, in the County of Kent, under section 14(1)(a) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 because works are proposed to be executed on the road. The effect of the Order would be -

- (a) to impose an overnight temporary mandatory 50mph speed restriction on -
 - (i) the eastbound carriageway of the M2 between Forge Lane overbridge and the tip of the nosing of the 'on' slip road at Junction 5 (A249),
 - (ii) both carriageways of the M2 between Primrose Lane overbridge and 1004 metres east of Sawpit Road overbridge,
 - (iii) the eastbound carriageway of the M2 between the tip of the nosing of the 'off' slip road at Junction 6 (A251) and Selling Road overbridge,
 - (iv) the westbound carriageway of the M2 between Selling Road overbridge and the tip of the nosing of the 'on' slip road at Junction 6 (A251), and
 - (v) the westbound carriageway of the M2 between Vinsons Farm underbridge and Bull Lane;
- (b) to authorise the overnight closures of the following:
 - (i) in phases the eastbound carriageway of the M2 between the tip of the nosing of the 'off' slip road at Junction 4 (A278) and the tip of the nosing of the 'on' slip road at Junction 6 (A251),
 - (ii) the westbound carriageway of the M2 between the tip of the nosing of the 'off' slip road at Junction 6 (A251) and the tip of the nosing of the 'on' slip road at Junction 4 (A278), and
 - (iii) all slip roads leading to and from the carriageways described at (b)(i) and (b)(ii) above; and
- (c) to authorise overnight hard shoulder running on both carriageways of the M2 between points 500 metres east and 500 west of Bottom Pond underbridge.

These measures would be in the interest of road safety while contractors undertake resurfacing, structure works, reinstallation of studs and loops and all associated carriageway work.

It is expected that the work would take place for approximately 4 ½ months starting on or after Monday 19 January 2015 between 20:00 and 06:00 (maximum period). The Order would come into force on 17 January 2015 and have a maximum duration of eighteen months.

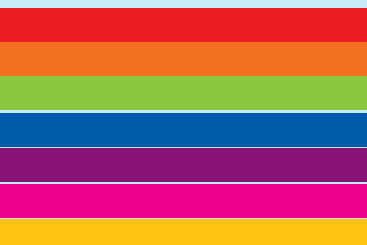
During the closures outlined above, traffic affected would be diverted using the A229, M20, A249, A20, A252 and the A251. The diversion route would vary depending on the closure in place. Traffic at Medway Services wanting the Travel Lodge would need to follow the signed diversion route at Medway Services.

The temporary mandatory speed restrictions, slip road closures, hard shoulder running, carriageway closures and diversion routes would be clearly indicated by traffic signs when they are in operation during the works period.

D Walker, Network Delivery & Development, Highways Agency, Department for Transport, Ref: HA/SE/2014/M2/164
Enquiries relating to this notice may be made in writing to Mr B Vishnubala, Network Delivery & Development, at the Highways Agency, Federated House, London Road, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 1SZ (e-mail: bala.vishnubala@highways.gsi.gov.uk) or by telephoning 01306 878 114, <http://www.highways.gov.uk>

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TV deal to screen Whites v Palace

Dover Athletic will pocket £144,000 for FA Cup TV coverage



CRABBLE: Set to see a sell-out crowd when the Eagles come to town

Pictures: ADY KERRY

Football

By Jamie Weir

jamie.weir@archant.co.uk

DOVER Athletic are set to see one of the club's biggest ever paydays, after it was announced they will pocket a cool £144,000 for their eagerly anticipated FA Cup third round clash with Crystal Palace.

The cash from the Football Association comes after the game was selected to be televised live.

The rights for the knock-out tournament are shared between the BBC and BT Sport.

Dover's clash with the Eagles will be shown live on BT Sport 1 when the game kicks off at 1pm on Sunday, January 4.

BT Sport is certainly no stranger to

the county. It was at Maidstone United's Gallagher Stadium last month to watch the Ryman League side triumph in their first round tie replay with Stevenage.

The Crabble is set to sell out its capacity, which it confirmed will be 5,745 for the match.

Ticket prices for the match were confirmed on Friday as £20 for the terraces and £25 for seating. The match will be all-ticket and none will be available on the day. Palace fans have been allocated the Town and Family stands.

Splitting gate receipts, increased merchandise and refreshment sales, along with prize money already secured for reaching this round of the tournament could mean Dover are finally looking at the cup run netting them closer to £250,000.

Dover were drawn against Palace during the live televised cup draw on

Monday night. It sent the club - and the town - into raptures. Dover were the only non-league club left in the competition to be drawn against Premier League opposition.

Dover manager Chris Kinnear said of the draw: "It's great. They are our nearest Premier League club in south London so it should be a great day."

Tickets will go on general sale on Friday, December 19, for two days initially.

Crabble will be open between 11am and 2pm, and 5pm and 7pm on Friday and on Saturday between 9am and noon. Tickets are limited to four per person.

Season ticket holders get the first chance to secure a seat on Wednesday and Thursday. They can buy one ticket per person.

The remaining tickets will go on sale during the Whites' Boxing Day clash with Welling United.

Day era dawns at Fleet as Welling boss snared

EBBSFLEET United have ended weeks of speculation by confirming they have hired Welling United boss Jamie Day as their new manager.

The 35-year-old was appointed on Wednesday. He was one of the earliest names suggested for the post.

He becomes the full-time replacement to Steve Brown who was sacked by the club at the end of last month.

Fleet vice chairman, Peter Varney, said the board were happy with the appointment.

He said: "The owner and the board opted not to advertise the role as having considered the potential candidates, they were unanimous that Jamie Day was the only candidate they wished to initially discuss the vacancy with."

"The discussions with Welling



EBBSFLEET: Poached former Welling manager Jamie Day

United have been amicable and we have reached a compensation package acceptable to both clubs."

Mr Varney also praised Day, saying that he believed that the new manager would be able to lead the Fleet to victory.

He said: "Jamie has done an absolutely brilliant job at Welling over the past five years and we believe he is the right man to bring success to the club."

"He will have the full backing of the owner to do just that."

Ironically, Ebbsfleet entertained Welling on Saturday in the FA Trophy. The result was after his newspaper went to press.

Day, however, watched the game from the stands and let interim boss Daryl McMahon take charge.

Added Varney: "I cannot speak highly enough of Daryl."

"He stepped up to the plate and did what he believed was best."

Sport Shorts

» Email sports@kosmedia.co.uk or call Jamie Weir on 01233 653481

Funding wins Nevill a return for one-day ties

TUNBRIDGE Wells is set to once again host the money-spinning short form of the domestic cricket game this season.

Kent confirmed on Friday the Nevill will host three fixtures for 2015, marking a return to the ground hosting Natwest T20 Blast and Royal London One-Day Cup cricket in July.

Funding has been secured to install a temporary stand, making the operation of the shorter forms of the game viable.

The stand has been underwritten by local businessman Freddie Cook.

Mr Cook said: "I was saddened when the festival was retrenched last year and was determined to ensure that the festival was maintained and in fact restored to its former glory."

"For the good of cricket throughout west Kent, it is important we have a full cricket festival."

The ground will host one-day games with Essex and Glamorgan to book-end a four-day County Championship match with Essex.



FAST: Kent will play Essex and Glamorgan at the Nevill



DISCO: Walked after disagreeing with the manager

Disco Douglas dances off after row with boss

INVICTA Dynamos' goalie, Chris 'Disco' Douglas, has walked away from the Gillingham club after a heated 'discussion' with Mos' head coach, Kevin Parrish.

Parrish said: "We'll probably keep it in house as to what exactly has occurred but the end result is that Chris has decided to leave the Dynamos. It's unfortunate that it has happened and we have lost a very, very good goalie but things like this take place in hockey and now we'll have to move on."

With Douglas moving on after 61

appearances for the Dynamos, the team are in need of someone in goal.

Mark Lee and Steve Nightingale will be sharing netminding duties for the time being, but neither can go full time for the team.

But Parrish says the hunt is on to find a replacement for Disco, and shouldn't take too long.

He said: "The loss of Chris Douglas means I'm looking for a new goalie. I've already been in contact with a couple of guys so, with a bit of luck, we will hopefully have another player in place for next weekend."

Take tea with Kent cricket legend

FORMER Kent and England fast bowler, turned umpire, Martin Sadders, is going to be making a return to the Spitfire Ground, St Lawrence next month.

Sadders will be holding an informal gathering where he will share his experiences of making the transition from being a professional cricketer to umpire.

The afternoon tea gathering will take place at 2.30pm on January 20, 2015.

Each afternoon tea ticket costs £8 and will include tea, coffee and scones.

To book, ring Matt Kingsland 01227 473 612 (weekdays 9am-5pm) or e-mail sales-thespitfireground@centerplate.co.uk

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